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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME IX — NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1932 — NUMBER 15

ILLUSTRATION FROM "MARK TWAIN'S AMERICA."

Mark Twain Himself*

By HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THE vitality of great books is shown by the quarrels that arise over them—certainly one of the greatest compliments ever paid to Shakespeare is the long-sustained contention that he was not enough of a man to write his plays. As the interest in our national literature rises and an understanding of its true values becomes more and more general, such quarrels and sharper and sharper struggles between schools of critical thought, begin to distinguish areas where disputed greatness lies. The "Leaves of Grass" has long been such an area, Emerson has provided a field for battle, so has Melville, so has Poe, and especially Mark Twain.

The history of Mark Twain's reputation can be generalized in a few sentences. He was a popular lecturer and wisecracker, regarded rather patronizingly and with much disfavor (even in my youth) by the literati; he became, at the end of the century, a figure of literary importance, though still regarded as a "rough-neck" by the pseudo-Federalists. He was granted a competence in books for children, granted satiric power, but scarcely to be estimated as a man of letters in the European sense. Suddenly the dam broke and his vast popularity burst into fame. It was almost at this moment that the new criticism of America as a social and psychological experiment gone wrong, began. And with Van Wyck Brooks's "The Ordeal of Mark Twain," the now thoroughly respectable author became a laboratory for studies in what the critics were pleased to call the frustration of American genius. A frontiersman become a Hartford bourgeois, a humorist turned tragic ironist, gave an opportunity to define complexes which were said to arise from unhappy American conditions, ranging from the frigidity of American wives to the closing of the American frontier.

Many of us felt at the time that Mr. Brooks, who is at home (much more at home than Mr. De Voto) when he studies New England, was writing from theory rather than facts in "The Ordeal of Mark Twain." We felt that he was more concerned with the ills of America than with the truth about Mark Twain, and that he neglected the essential Westerner in the hope of proving something about the area which, for him, was America, the East. But most of the skeptics (and I rank myself as one of the protesters) knew too little realistically and by first-hand study of the conditions of Mark Twain's formative environment to do more than enter a caveat. We feared to dogmatize his West, as Brooks had unquestionably dogmatized him.

Mr. De Voto has written the book which was needed, but that has not satisfied him. He has used his brilliant reconstruction of the life in the Mississippi Valley, in the Rockies, and in San Francisco which formed Samuel Clemens, as material for controversy, and has dropped description and biography every few pages to throw rocks at the psycho-sociological critics who have tried to interpret a great American without knowing intimately either his own America or even his works, and who have substituted a

(*Continued on page* 202)

* MARK TWAIN'S AMERICA. By BERNARD DE VOTO. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1932. $4.

Herrick in Exile

(The Puritans banished Robert Herrick, the poet, to the solitary living of Dean Priory in Devonshire.)

By CLINTON SCOLLARD

NOW I am sad and sore beset
With longing to be gone
From the dull Devonshire, and
There's lark song every dawn
And every eve the nightingale
Takes up the burden of its tale.

But I had rather hear the cart
Wheel over London stones
Than listen to the warbler's art,
The rillet's rimpling tones;
And more to me the play-boy's cry
Than any rural litany.

When I am dining with the Squire
And list his empty chaff,
I mind me of Jack Suckling's fire,
Ben Jonson's lusty laugh;
What were all dragging nights to one
Gay midnight at *The Triple Tun!*

Were I by the smug crop-haired crowd
Of living dispossessed,
Elation—so I will be vowed—
Would mount up in my breast;
I'd cheer King Charles—'twould not be shammed—
And bid all Puritans be damned!

What Norman Thomas Reads

Mr. Norman Thomas, the candidate for the Presidency nominated by the Socialist Party, has been speaking on the Pacific Coast, and it had been impossible to procure an interview with him on the horizons of his taste in books. However, Mr. Thomas is himself an author and a reviewer as well as a political leader, and here speaks for himself.—The Editors.

En route to Cheyenne, October 12th.

Dear Mr. Canby:

Your request for me to expose my own reading tastes without benefit of a Morley or a Van Loon has reached me in the midst of a trip which has reduced me to the level of an animated loud speaker with almost no time to eat or sleep, let alone read or write. Is it part of the penalty I pay for writing my own speeches that I must also write an abridged edition of an "Education of Norman Thomas"?

At present my reading has run counter to my tastes—at any rate my esthetic tastes. I have to read over my own speeches, Mr. Hoover's, Mr. Roosevelt's, and occasionally even the efforts of Mr. Curtis, Mr. Garner, and others. Even when the exigencies of a political campaign are not on me I have to do a great deal of trade reading, that is, newspaper and magazine articles as well as books pertaining to current political, economic, and social problems. I can only rejoice that Stuart Chase and others have set a new style in intelligible and even delightful English in the discussion of these problems. When I do read for pleasure I find myself hopelessly old-fashioned. I never could get interested in James Joyce or Marcel Proust. I like biography and history and some of this science-made-easy that Eddington and Bertrand Russell write, rather better than most fiction or poetry. That didn't prevent my getting an immense satisfaction out of "Conquistador" lately, as formerly out of "John Brown." In general I like Robinson and Frost best of American poets. And I have enjoyed some of Louis Untermeyer's Anthologies of modern verse rather than straight doses of the poets represented. I confess that I have less taste for fiction than formerly. In my youth I got much pleasure out of the then classics—Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, yes, and James Fenimore Cooper. My children will tell you that that dates me. Later on came the usual Stevenson, Kipling, O. Henry. Still later Upton Sinclair—he's my candidate for the Nobel Prize—Sinclair Lewis, Dreiser, and a taste of most of the Americans. I have read with pleasure H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, Galsworthy, and some of Walpole. (You will observe and judge my omissions.) I like the theatre and prefer to see rather than to read a play even though Shaw throws in his prefaces to entice his reader.

Neither you nor anyone else ever asked me to justify my tastes or lack of them. You only ask me to review books in the fields of economics and politics and not always very good ones at that.

This isn't a catalogue of books I've read and enjoyed. I am more interested in some aspects of the literature of social revolt than what I have written would argue. I confess also a somewhat declining taste in detective stories. Most of them, alas, aren't worth the time to discover how poor they are.

One thing I might add. In the retrospect it is one of the compensations for a rather sickly boyhood that it drove me to read widely and rather solidly. It was a queerly assorted list of books good and not so good, from Gibbon's "Rome" and Morley's "Dutch Republic" to Oliver Optic. But it did get me started on standard history, biography, and poetry. I added to this stock far less than I should in college where I illustrated how easy it is to stand high without getting a real education. I did get a genuine liking for some of the older poets and novelists. In that line my professional training in a field I have since abandoned did more for me. It quickened my interest in philosophy and psychology. Alas, no education ever made reading in the original of any language other than English anything else than a chore. With which confession I end.

Truly yours,

NORMAN THOMAS.

NORMAN THOMAS.

This Week

"SAPPHO OF LESBOS."
Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS.

"THE MARCH OF DEMOCRACY."
Reviewed by SIDNEY K. MITCHELL.

"RIP TIDE."
Reviewed by HARRIET MONROE.

"A GOODLY HERITAGE."
Reviewed by ARTHUR TRAIN.

"METTERNICH."
Reviewed by WILLIAM L. LANGER.

"GOD'S ANGRY MAN."
Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT.

"SONS OF THE MARTIAN."
Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD.

"THE SHADOW FLIES."
Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

A LETTER TO POETS.
By LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

177 WORDS
By DON MARQUIS.

HUMAN BEING.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week, or Later

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.
By T. E. SHAW (Lawrence of Arabia).

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theory for a man and his books. I wish myself that this able study were not so controversial. I wish that Mr. De Voto had thrown his stones in a pamphlet and written his book afterward. It is too good a book to be tipped from its balance by the violence of his attacks on critics who may have misrepresented Mark Twain but are only obstacles in the author's way, not his objective, which is a truer estimate of Twain. I wish that he had come to his admirable material and his wise interpretations in a calmer and more definitive mood—for in his violent dislike of the school of Cambridge (where he is, I believe, a professor) and of Mark Twain's enemies everywhere, he has poured a scorn upon Oliver Wendell Holmes's provincialisms and upon Emerson's pieties which leave him, as a critic of New England, its background, its purposes, its qualities, quite as vulnerable as Mr. Brooks in the West.

I note, however, that this book is often called a Preface, a Preface perhaps to a Life of Mark Twain, in which the dust and sweat and foul blows and offside plays will be forgotten. I hope this is the case, for if the true Mark Twain is ever to be summarized, Mr. De Voto or someone using his knowledge and penetration, must do it. Nevertheless, if "Mark Twain's America" is like a county fair, with Mark Twain exhibits everywhere, and a lecturer on one platform expounding his virtues, while Mr. De Voto's alter ego, on another, punches Mr. Brooks and Mr. Mumford and Dr. Holmes and Bret Harte from morn to dewy eve, its vitality, at least, does not suffer from such a picturesque structure. It has, as the good colloquial saying goes, the goods.

After what clearly has been long and careful research, Mr. De Voto has built up in a series of chapters a social history where the upper Mississippi of Twain's youth and the Nevada of his early maturity, get the most space. Much of his background has been studied before, but seldom so vividly, and never with such an intimate relation to the books which are the literary monuments of that dead past.

Mark's youth its indelible stamp. He makes a sharp and useful distinction between the squatter and the successful frontiersman, the former with the marks of degeneracy which supplied foreigners then, and the discontented now, with descriptions of the American complex, the latter displaying the gusto, the incredible energy and health, of the democratic experiment. He describes in striking detail the underworld of the great valley—the butcher-knife boys, the pirates, such as Murrell, the steam-boat crooks, the unparalleled greed of commercialism which lay behind romance. And here his purpose is to show that even as a youth Mark Twain was familiar with the disillusions of those who expect too much of the human species, and needed no experience with later capitalism, no conflicts with Eastern hypocrisies, to teach him the tragic irony of life. De Voto moves competently through the little known regions of Western newspaper humor, proves conclusively that Mark knew what he was about and what he wanted when he became a humorist, and that the alleged suppressed Shelley in him was sheer critic's imagination. He devotes a most valuable and illuminating chapter to the negro influences on the young Twain, that dark humorous life of superstition, fear, and credulity which remains as an eerie background and deep lake of intuition in all his later work. He turns aside more than once to emphasize a factor in Twain's life, and that of so many Americans, which has been egregiously neglected by the cockney school of critics—the pervading power over the imagination of the unspoiled reaches of primitive America, magnificent forests, meadows incredibly lush in unspoiled beauty, depth, height, and space in the symmetry which unexploited nature exhibited perhaps more gorgeously here than elsewhere in the world. That motive rings through all American imagination, for as Thoreau said, the typical American youth was a hunter and a fisherman, seeking the woods. And De Voto speaks, though I think not strongly enough, of the depressive effect upon the sensitive of the destruction of so much beauty, the burning, hacking, uglifying of a whole country, which exchanged for the idyllic and the majestic, the useful and the mean. Certainly "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn" mean less than they should to those who do not see in them (as in Bartram's "Travels") a vision of the beauty of the primitive, which is not Rousseauism but merely fact.

The book ends with Twain's first important adventure into the East, and the famous dinner at which his humorous account of how the Massachusetts immortals would have behaved in the Sierras shocked the respectable. It ends here, as biography, but as criticism it continues with elaborate interpretations of Twain's great books, based on the history of his Western youth, illuminated by it, and illuminating also the West.

These critical estimates seem to me excellent. Objections can be filed against many statements and against many too narrow interpretations, but without ques-

[illegible] was essentially a Western democratic man, close to nature, close to human nature, close to the intense experience of men and women who are protected from nothing except, perhaps, abstract ideas, and living in a realism which was not more real (and in saying so Mr. De Voto reveals his own brand of provincialism) than the intellectual and esthetic life of Concord or Cambridge, but certainly far more human, far more varied, much closer to the continuous experience of the human race. Twain *was* democracy, even while his mind sorted and satirized it. He had been jailed for drunkenness, he had shared the dream of perfectibility, he had seen men killed, he had watched every passion let loose, he had known sensuality and superstition at first hand, he had been a part of the Golden Age of individualism, yet knew, like Mercutio, its hinder parts, he had been one of those recklessly living characters whom Emerson often wished to know more intimately, he came to an East, and to a culture that he respected, like Odysseus, knowing men and cities, he was the dream and the reality, he had experienced the idyll, the humor, the disillusionment, the hate, and the sardonic realism of democratic man in an environment which gave opportunities which the individual, if not the race, was worthy to take.

"Mark Twain's America," then, is a forcible plea for interpreting a great writer by what he wanted to do, by what he did, by the materials out of which he made it, instead of by theories of repression or frustration drawn from a society far different from the one which made him. It is a valid argument and will help to give, I trust, the new turn to our studies, not only of Twain, but of Thoreau, of Howells, of Franklin, and of Whitman, which many have desired. Mr. Brooks's recent book on Emerson is an excellent example of the same method applied to the Concord sage, in sharp contrast to his earlier work on Twain. But though valid, the argument is not complete. It is good to see a knock-out of the legend that Howells and Gilder and Mrs. Clemens among them suppressed an original genius by frightening him into decency. Close readers of Twain have never believed that he wanted to write about sex, or that "Tom Sawyer" would have gained if D. H. Lawrence had collaborated, or been importantly better if the cuss words had been left in the manuscript. The conventions of that period were ridiculous, but they probably saved us, in Twain's case, from ten absurdities of bad taste (of which too many remain) for one bit of strong and plain speaking that was lost. It is interesting to see the tradition of the American anecdote worked out from its obscure origins up into its apotheosis in the best of Twain, although I think Mr. De Voto very much underestimates the effect of the lecture platform upon his style. But a complete estimate of Twain will not be content to rest everything upon the West. De Voto is so eager to demonstrate Virginia City or the Mississippi Valley in everything Twain wrote that he forgets the mature Mark Twain,

[illegible] country boy come to the city, the democrat immersed in European culture, the petty bourgeois, as Mr. Calverton would call him, aware of capitalism. In other words, like all debaters, he makes his case too simple. Without Mark Twain's America of the West, Mark Twain is inexplicable, but that granted, and made into comprehensible geography, the problem is reopened and in its solution there may be room even for frustrations and complexes. Something was learned in Europe and in Hartford as well as in Hannibal and San Francisco.

This book must be examined factually in some such medium as "American Literature." There are statements that will not hold water, there are errors such as calling Bret Harte (whom De Voto uses too harshly) Professor of Literature, there are rash generalizations such as the blanket charge that Twain had no sense of form, whereas the picaresque of which he was master is a form that is subtle, difficult, and exacting in a high degree. There are profound mischaracterizations of other writers, notably Dr. Holmes, who serves as a symbol of clever respectability, a quarter-truth as damaging as any of which De Voto accuses Brooks. There are provocative theories which need further consideration, as that the prevalent malaria of the frontier populations kept their average temperature a point up, and was manifest in their characteristic habits of life, their literature, their morale, and their religion. There is a juggling with the theory of sources, which are used either way as the argument demands. There is much vigorous, brilliant writing, and many unpardonably bad sentences. There is an animus against the East, an enthusiasm for the West, which are often quite as uncritical as the attempt of the communist intellectuals to reclassify American qualities in terms of Marx, or Mr. Brooks's endeavor to account for Twain's pessimism by morbid psychology. Yet this is a vital, vigorous, and a useful book. With all its faults of balance and unrestraint, it is a stroke on the right side. It is an attempt, as Mr. De Voto says, to study a great American for what he was, and by his books, rather than for what he ought to have been, or to illustrate a theory of failure. . . . "The intent has been to restore discussion of a man of letters to what he wrote."

And of this man of letters he says, in conclusion:

> There is more of America in Mark Twain's books than in any others. . . . Whatever else this frontier humorist did, whatever he failed to do, this much he did. He wrote books that have in them something eternally true to the core of his nation's life. . . . His books [are] American life formed into great fiction. . . . They are at the center; all other books whatsoever are farther away.

This is overstatement and loose statement. The center of American life has not so certainly been located in the Mississippi Valley, or in the experiences of one sort of reality. Whitman and Emerson have claims which rhetoric and enthusiasm cannot discard. But it has as much truth as one can expect in the last sentences of a book, and enough truth to be memorable. For there are not more than fifteen or twenty books in English belles lettres of the latter half of the nineteenth century that are worthy to be recorded with "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," and which so indisputably belong, not only to a nation's core, but to world literature.

Burning Sappho

SAPPHO OF LESBOS: Her Life and Times. By ARTHUR WEIGALL. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

MR. WEIGALL, accomplished archaeologist and romantic historian, has done better with Sappho's times than with her life. The sixth century B. C. was an unusually interesting age, in its political and social aspects much resembling the early Renaissance; and Mr. Weigall gives a good account of the Greek world in those

About the poet herself, ancient writers handed down many scraps of information or misinformation; Mr. Weigall knows his sources, but he combines a broad scholarship with a remarkable lack of discrimination.

Even so, the material is insufficient for anything like a complete biography, so the author fills in the gaps with guesses and conjectures and unsubstantiated assumptions. This is the legitimate technique of the historical novelist; but a biographer who employs it sacrifices any pretense at authenticity without gaining the freedom of fiction. Roguishly, Mr. Weigall fears that he may be criticized for "having introduced a considerable amount of matter relating to what may be called the sex life of that age. However, I have endeavored to handle the subject with a light touch." If his touch is light a hippopotamus is a featherweight; and when he ascribes to Lesbian girls of the aristocracy the sexual practices of the Lydian masses without a shred of evidence and in plain contradiction of the implications of the poems—it begins to seem that he is not only a pornographer but an inefficient pornographer. People who are interested in what may be called the sex life of that age had better borrow a translation of Herodotus and get it at first hand.

Mr. Weigall interprets Sappho's character very shrewdly, however, and at one point offers a novel and plausible suggestion. The fragments of her verses lately recovered by the papyrologists destroy the last apologetic doubt that she was a lover of women; and he suggests that the long war of Lesbos with Athens, taking up most of her girlhood, which took the Lesbian young men away from home for long periods and sent them back coarsened, may have given the sensitive girl who was reduced most of the time to girls' companionship the emotional set that conditioned her later life and flowered in some of the finest lyrics ever written.

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National Annals

THE MARCH OF DEMOCRACY, The Rise of the Union. By JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932. $3.50.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE. By CHARLES SEIGNOBOS. Translated from the French by CATHERINE ALISON PHILLIPS. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1932. $4.25.

Reviewed by SYDNEY K. MITCHELL
Yale University

THESE two books are inspired by similar motives. The aim of each author is to trace briefly the evolution of his own country, but for the general reader, not the specialist. Each scholar is a master in his own field. It is a good sign that such works should come from the pens of writers distinguished alike for scholarship and artistic treatment. Each has a difficult task, different in nature. Mr. Adams who has just completed the "Epic of America" in which he took for granted the narrative thread of American history and expounded the main factors which constituted our history an "epic," plans in this present work to introduce a brief factual narrative as a framework for his philosophizing generalizations and his word pictures of conditions and movements. It is to be in two volumes, and this first instalment reaches to the opening of the Civil War, a little over three hundred years. M. Seignobos puts forth a single volume of about the same size on the whole history of France, embracing something like two thousand years, nearly half of which he devotes to the period before 1500. Such differences in the time element enforce a radical difference in plan.

Mr. Adams has space for biographical sketches, for battles and wars, for detail and incident of many kinds which enliven his pages with color and animation. For lack of space, M. Seignobos must eschew such particulars. Instead he sets forth in his twenty-one chapters the primary elements in the evolution of each age in the story of France, and he is obliged to hold the attention of the reader purely by the interest of his thought, the logic and clarity of his statement, and the seeming originality of his conclusions.

A wise historian has said: "Each generation has to write its own history of the past under the influence of its own ideals." These books illustrate the truth of his statement for they have been produced under the impulse of the ideals of the age of democracy and of our interest in social history. They aim to trace the evolution of the common people. In Mr. Adams's volume, those chapters that present social, economic, and intellectual conditions constitute the most enthralling parts of the work. Here the author displays all his well known gifts for handling easily great masses of material of this kind. In comparison, the narrative portions leave one a little cold. It is, of course, difficult to rewrite a story of the hackneyed elementary facts in lively fashion. Trevelyan felt the difficulty when he composed his one-volume history of England and we find him taking for granted a certain background of knowledge on the part of his readers.

In the present instance, the attempt has been fairly successful though the impression is created at times that the narrative bores the author, for some facts are introduced without special explanation and the allotment of space and the choice of detail sometimes appears casual and arbitrary. The effort to vitalize well known incidents may lead to occasional slips. At the battle of Bunker Hill, he says, the British charged "again and again," though they actually marched twice up the slope before their final victorious advance. They lost, he says, from a third to a half of their total force killed, of course meaning killed and wounded (quite a different matter). The Americans were to hold their fire till they could "aim at the whites of the eyes" of the British; of course it should read "till they could *see* the whites of their eyes"; they were to aim at their coats or their hips. The British, he says, had "naturally shown the greatest courage" because they had charged; yet the whole significance of Bunker Hill was that the raw American militia resisted for so long the charge of the British regulars; his own account suggests that the "natural courage" of the former was at least as great as that of the latter. On the whole, however, it is a vigorous narrative.

M. Seignobos is also interested in all the people, with particular emphasis on what he calls the French type. This, he declares, can be clearly discerned from the first half of the seventeenth century—

> A peasant, artisan, and bourgeois type of character, prudent, distrustful, and economical, greatly inclined to

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS.

> vanity, very sociable though not very hospitable, endowed with a swift, clear, and precise intelligence, prone to mockery rather than to enthusiasm, ready of speech and fond of talking, skilled in psychological observation, more circumspect and calculating than its easy flow of words and frequent gestures would lead foreigners to suppose, inured by a long tradition to a regular life, greatly attached to its every day habits, and better suited to individual work than to collective enterprises. This French type, which is indeed very different from the idea formed of it by foreigners, has shown itself capable of making good soldiers when forced to do so, but has no taste for war.

He devotes especial attention to politics, feeling that it has exercised immense influence upon his countrymen. In this respect he and Mr. Adams differ. He may be right in his emphasis, but under the influence of this notion he becomes at times so detailed and technical, particularly in the discussion of recent history, that the interest of any general reader must inevitably flag. A little less of the minutiæ of constitutional and administrative organization and a little expansion of the economic and social phases would have greatly enlivened the discussion without the sacrifice of scientific accuracy.

We used to be taught that one of the pitfalls of the historian was bias. Measured by a high standard in this respect, both authors come off very well. It is true that Mr. Adams voices his opinions on many matters more frankly than do some of his contemporaries. He does not hesitate to declare his dislike for the "vain," "egotistical," "militaristic" French, or for "reformers," like the Abolitionists and Prohibitionists, but on the whole he speaks with moderation, with far more consideration than before. And M. Seignobos evinces even more urbanity, though he too takes a fling at the French kings, the nobles, and those historians of his country who have spread abroad wrong impressions of the true nature of the French. Each is in his own way a reformer. For example, Mr. Adams would obliterate from the minds of Americans the legend that Britain has been our inveterate enemy and would draw together these two branches of the "Anglo-Saxon" race. M. Seignobos would demonstrate by this "sincere" history of the French that they are a sober, conservative, peace-loving race. Let us not bar the expressions of personal opinions; they add flavor and life to the volumes and they represent the conclusions of these scholars.

This French history is not illustrated, but one of the most delightful features of the "March" lies in the copious illustrations, chosen from contemporary prints, pictures, and documents. How much they aid in reconstructing the past! They demonstrate the growing effect exercised on the production of histories by works like the "Pageant of America" and the value inherent in the great collections of these materials now being formed by some of our patrons of arts and letters.

Mr. Benét's Verse Tale

RIP TIDE: A Novel in Verse. By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT. New York: Duffield & Green. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by HARRIET MONROE

IN spite of certain lapses, Mr. Benét has made a poem of his novel. It is true, as the jacket says the author believes, that "a story may be told in verse with a condensation and intensification not possible to prose . . . and that it can be just as natural." But it is also true that the telling in verse makes a more severe demand upon the writer, not only in the obvious details of fitting a story to verse technique, but in lifting and holding the story to the higher levels of the poetic imagination. Nothing is so prosy as a verse-tale which does not reach and keep these levels; no one is so mistaken as the poet who thinks that mere rhyme and metrics will carry him to these upper ranges and sustain him there.

On the whole Mr. Benét moves securely on his poetic plateau—not the lofty epic heights, but a mountain meadow where there are grasses and flowers and views of the sea and icy, steep declivities. His progress is interrupted now and then by lines, or even passages, of prose, usually in the dialogue sections; the most flagrant example being two or three pages of talk between the young Barry and his chum, where the loosely woven pentameter rhymes make a clever pattern but sadly stiffen the friendly jargon of youth. Or we may find stylistic offences like this:

> She wondered now as she had wondered then,
> Grasped by a will to which her will was water,
> Why all young love had meant had not prevailed
> Despite one careless boy who ceased to write.

The poet is happier in descriptive passages, whether of nature or human character. Here, from the first section of the poem, is a stanza showing forth the heroine's tragically ineffectual husband, him of the "burning eyes," the "hawklike face," the "ever-restless hands"—an eight-line stanza, rhyming 1-5, 2-6, etc.:

> So he, who lived by fire, famished by fire,
> Changelessly unconsumed and burning ever,
> His passion always razing what he reared,
> His heart a hound hunting to kill his peace
> Though ever tracking beauty with desire,
> Gazed at the wasting prey of one endeavor
> And felt her tugging heart that leapt and veered
> Beneath his hand and quivered for release.

The poet changes his measures and stanza-forms adroitly, slipping in grace-notes of extra short syllables to quicken the pace of the pentameter lines—

> Something fortuitous willed it should find her alone—

Or cutting down to three's and two's:

> Heart lead-encased—
> O difficult breath!—
> Taste as of death
> In the writhing mouth—

and returning to the slower iambics for the final tragedy, ending finally to the sound of the ocean, with which the poem began, when the actors in it

> Heard in their ears, all night, like the drums of fate,
> The far-off surf, the wind that would not abate,
> The roar of the sea, the heavy roll of the tide,
> And thought their ears would hold that sound forever.

The climax of the poem—the discovery to each other of father and son—is skilfully stripped bare of any unnecessary trope or word. It is done with complete competence, with appreciation of dramatic values, with every excellence except the last magic of great poetry.

In his treatment of the theme it would seem that Mr. Benét fumbled his chance at some kind of a really modern development. He surrendered to a romantic temptation to let the tempestuous surf kill off his young hero and thereby save everybody trouble. But this was begging the question, for the situation invited trouble. The poet leads up simply and dramatically to his climax: the house party of young people, with the head of the house, Gordon Powell, away at first, and his daughter falling in love with a tall young guest and getting engaged; Gordon's return and gradual realization that his daughter's suitor is his own son by a secret, brief liaison with a young matron who had died soon after; the young man asking the older one for his daughter's hand, and Gordon answering that the marriage can never take place and bluntly telling the shocked young suitor why.

One is tempted to follow in imagination a number of leads to possible endings. Suppose the poet had made Gordon hold his peace, and suffer horribly as the lovers rushed ignorantly into an incestuous marriage—that might have been an almost Freudian study of a strong man writhing into suicide or insanity, or of a weak one slithering into abysses of despairing secrecy or ultimate revelation; all this involving a presentation of human agony worthy of Jeffers himself. Or the young lover, under the shock of Gordon's terrible revelation, might have killed himself; or he might have told the girl,

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

and made it, sooner or later, a double suicide; or he might have run away and left the girl to shoulder the agony. By any one of a number of endings the poet would have faced the issue raised by his plot, and followed it consistently to a credible modern finale. But an incurable romanticism got in his way; he must needs call in a tempest to kill off his hero, and not only that, but the hero must die a hero's death, must be dashed on the rocks in saving his sweetheart from the undertow.

The result of this concession to romance is a softening of fibre and a relaxing of the reader's interest. Somehow Gordon becomes commonplace when he so bluntly blurts out the terrible truth to the son he had never known, and one does not quite believe in nature's benevolent intercession—the storm and the violent death of the young lover seem manufactured, and thereby the story is lowered from the level of tragedy to that of melodrama.

It is the same poet who wrote "Merchants from Cathay," "The Horse Thief," and other fabulous ballads, only in these poems his romantic imagination moved more freely in its own element, was more at home than in this recent effort to invoke the fates and furies of tragedy.

Harriet Monroe, founder and editor of Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, *is not only one of the best known of American poets, but one to whom many of her colleagues owe their introduction to the public.*

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New England Girlhood

A GOODLY HERITAGE. By MARY ELLEN CHASE. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by ARTHUR TRAIN

THOSE who know and love eastern Maine, as well as all who are interested in the social history of America, will find pleasure and profit in Miss Chase's reminiscences of a New England girlhood passed in the village of Blue Hill in a beautiful and secluded nook of the New England coast. Written with gayety, wit, and observation, in an admirable literary style, to which the author's love of the classics has manifestly contributed, it is an engrossing and, at times, amazing narrative of the life in what still remained in many respects a pioneer community up to a quarter century ago. It is quite impossible to do justice to the content of this admirable book in a short review. The temptation to quote at length is difficult to resist, for it is replete with etchings of quaint and remarkable characters, humorous anecdotes, and illuminating comment. Absorbing throughout, it is especially valuable for its studies of the Puritan and seafaring tradition in a section only recently invaded by the movie and the motor car.

MAINE SHERIFF. BY MARGUERITE ZORACH.
From the Catalogue of the Whitney Museum of American Art (Rudge).

The author describes the happy, hardy life the Chase family led upon the farm, what they read, what games they played, the strange Indians, missionaries, pedlers, and gypsies who wandered through the town, how the children studied and went to church and spent the Lord's Day not even being permitted to knit in order to pass the time when they had the measles, their interest in geography arising out of the visits of their own seafaring relatives to distant lands. Together with several thrilling accounts of shipwrecks, among others was that of the experience of the author's grandmother upon her honeymoon when she sailed immediately after her wedding, upon her young husband's newly completed ship, *The Bride*, for a voyage to China, India, and around the Horn only to be wrecked off Hatteras and rescued after having been lashed to the mast exposed for thirty-six hours to the violence of the hurricane.

This immediate contact with and personal relationship to the far sounding and unharvested sea was what gave these Blue Hill children their sense of adventure and of mystery—that "wistfulness"—that keeps the soul alive. They heard from their own grandfathers of Barbary and Cathay, the Gold Coast and the South Seas. The West Indies and the ports of Europe were as familiar to them as Ellsworth and Bangor. One wonders what would have happened to the spirit of this out-of-the-way community, once there were no longer any old sailors to spin their yarns, and thus to furnish vicarious excitement to the natives, had the motor not come to enable its inhabitants to explore the world for themselves, and the telephone and radio to keep them in touch with what was going on outside. One fears that it might easily have sunk down into stodgy, bucolic dulness.

There certainly were intellectual giants in that part of New England in the last century and Miss Chase has done well to immortalize the unique figure of the Reverend Jonathan Fisher, whose genius was so multifarious that while ministering assiduously to his flock, he not only designed and built his own house, all his own furniture, constructed a clock which ran for fifty years, a printing press with wooden type, a windmill and machines for sawing wood, removing stones from fields, and splitting straws for hats, but, as well, raised all his own food, painted portraits, acted as surveyor for the community, and compiled a Hebrew lexicon, giving out his Sunday texts first in English and then in Hebrew or Greek so that the ears of his congregation "might be whetted by a desire for a more liberal education."

Like the Virgil whom she loves, Miss Chase sings of the simple joys of rural life. No one, after reading her book, will deny the justice of her claim to a goodly heritage. He may, however, incline to the opinion that it was a rather exceptional one, for it is hard to believe that at that time there were many families, either in Blue Hill or elsewhere, all the members of which were so soaked in classical culture, where the father "knew innumerable lines of the Iliad and Odyssey which he recited as he dressed in the morning and thundered out . . . as he descended the stairs for breakfast," while in the evenings the mother gathered her children about her "enormous mending-basket" and corrected relentlessly their renditions of Cæsar, Cicero, and Virgil.

> "Orgetonix," said my mother, holding a pair of worn red flannel drawers to the light, "would turn in his grave could he hear your translation."

A false quantity, an erroneous ascent or breathing even of the verbs in MI, must have seemed almost as great an infraction of the moral law as a violation of the Seventh Commandment. Yet they all loved it and seem never to have been so happy as when spouting Greek and Latin at one another while performing their daily manual tasks.

Miss Chase evidently felt a slight apprehension that some of her readers might doubt that such evenings could have been "typical of any period or of any environment," since she alleges in anticipation that "if so, they do not know the integrity and the solidarity existing from generation to generation in a rural American community, English by race and tradition; and . . . have not recognized the synthesis, still operative in the nineteenth century, between the primitive American setting and the intellectual heritage of the country. . . . For more than two centuries English Americans recognized with no sense of disparity the perennial nobleness and sacredness of hard, unremitting toil existing side by side with the perennial nobleness and sacredness of the things of the mind. Probably no other country can quietly boast of such an exalted synthesis." Miss Chase assures us that "hundreds of other Maine families in the 'nineties . . . believed and behaved in precisely the same manner. . . . If their children did not study Latin at a common table they studied history and geometry. The fact is that they *studied* with a naturalness and a faith unknown to the rank and file of twentieth century America." Without debating the question of the quantum of Maine culture around the turn of the century or belittling the value of the "synthesis of the hand and of the mind" arising from the simplicity of the life she and her Blue Hill contemporaries were so fortunate as to lead, this particular reader is somewhat chary of the analogy Miss Chase seeks to draw between their life and that of the ancients. Concededly its remoteness and tranquillity were conducive to high thinking. In those long summer afternoons and even longer winter evenings there was plenty of time to study and not much else to do. Unquestionably it was primitive—like many other places. Undoubtedly there was something rather Grecian about such an idyllic existence, but the Arcadian quality which the author emphasizes is probably due more to her own absorption in Greek culture than to the actual character of the environment which she stresses. She loves the Greeks and sees the past with Grecian eyes.

Certainly the town of Blue Hill, tucked away in its sheltered corner behind Mt. Desert Island, retained to an amazing degree the characteristics of the early Puritan frontier, and Miss Chase's account of her life there in 1900 bears a striking resemblance to that of this reviewer's own grandfather in Framingham, Massachusetts, a century earlier.

Arthur Train is the author of many novels. His last book, however, "Puritan's Progress," is a study of American backgrounds.

Of the Old School

METTERNICH. By ARTHUR HERMAN. New York: The Century Co. 1932. $5.

Reviewed by WILLIAM L. LANGER
Harvard University

TWO men may be said to have been chiefly responsible for encompassing the downfall of the great Napoleon. They were Lord Castlereagh and Prince Metternich. Both have had somewhat the same fate so far as the treatment of posterity is concerned. Throughout the rest of their lives they were execrated by liberal public opinion as being the bulwarks of reaction. In our own day they have been rescued, and while most great men have been "debunked," they have been raised to pinnacles of fame of which perhaps Metternich, but Castlereagh never, could have dreamed. Professor C. K. Webster's remarkable studies of Castlereagh's policy are well known to the English speaking world. The equally noteworthy critical writing on Metternich, however, has been allowed to slumber in the ponderous tomes with which German scholars have presented the historical profession.

Metternich was the scion of an old Rhenish noble family. As in the cases of many great men, the father happened to be a person of limited ability, while the mother was, to say the least, far above the average. The young man followed in the steps of the father and entered the Austrian diplomatic service. His marriage with the granddaughter of Prince Kaunitz strengthened his financial and social position tremendously. He was sent to Berlin as Austrian envoy in 1803. But his great accomplishment began when he went to Paris as Austrian ambassador in 1806. For three years he devoted himself to a study of Napoleonic France, its strength and its weakness, and more particularly to an analysis of the great Emperor himself. It was largely through Metternich's reports that the Austrian government was led to embark upon the disastrous war of 1809, which ended in the fourth defeat at the hands of revolutionary France and the further dismemberment of the much tried Hapsburg dominions. Yet Metternich, for reasons still rather obscure, was appointed foreign minister in succession to Count Stadion. The great years of his life began. He was still convinced that the Napoleonic Empire was doomed. To protect Austria till that day he married Marie Louise to the conqueror and entered upon an alliance with France. Even after Napoleon's disaster in Russia in 1812 he did not go over to the side of the Czar, but maintained neutrality until Austria was fully prepared. By holding the balance in his hand he practically secured for the Hapsburgs the leadership in the Grand Alliance. No one will deny that Metternich's diplomacy in these years entitle him to rank with the greatest statesmen of all time.

But Metternich was interested not only in the defeat of Napoleon. For him the great conqueror was merely the embodiment of the principles of the revolution, and the revolution had appeared to him, from the time when he first observed it in his youth, as a most vicious movement which threatened the overturn of the whole social order. More than most statesmen Metternich was inclined to theorize. In his opinion the dangerous principles of democracy and nationalism were propagated by a small group of middle class people who had only their own advantage in view. If the governments had taken a strong stand from the beginning, if they had really governed, the disease would never have had the opportunity to develop so far. It therefore followed that every effort must be made to check the further growth of the cancer. This is the explanation of Metternich's whole policy after 1815. In foreign affairs he advocated lenient treatment for France, and he tried hard all his life to shelve the antagonism between Austria and Prussia. The two together should safeguard Germany against the revolution, and force a conservative policy upon the smaller states.

This is not the place to discuss in detail the workings of Metternich's policy or the machinery of his so-called system. It was essentially a policy of stagnation, which certainly had its *raison d'être* in 1815. The chief weakness of Metternich's philosophy was that it made no allowance for the inevitable change which marks the evolution of humanity. What was appropriate in 1815 was not necessarily called for in 1830, much less in 1848. Metternich himself saw this. He did, indeed, have an unusual gift of prophetic insight, as Disraeli pointed out. But he could not change. He regarded himself as a crusader, and when he was swept away by the revolution of 1848 he took his fate with equanimity. During the last decade of his life, from 1849 to 1859, he was the same man he had always been. No one would accuse him of inconsistency. His weakness was rather his inflexibility.

This picture differs widely from the accepted view of nineteenth century historians, who would have us believe that Metternich lacked not only heart, but brains, that he was a vain, sensual, untruthful, narrow-minded trickster and fanatic. But history has to be rewritten every so often. With the World War behind us we have changed our ideas of the nineteenth century and its shibboleths. Metternich, like Castlereagh, looks different now, and though the conclusions of Metternich's great biographer, Professor Srbik, have been challenged by some, they have been accepted by most. Mr. Herman's volume is a good example. It is well that we should have the findings of recent scholarship so clearly and succinctly presented to the Anglo-Saxon world. The book has no originality and is written in a somewhat helpless and undistinguished style. But it is essentially accurate and should do much to revise popular ideas of a statesman who deserves much more sympathetic treatment than he has usually received.

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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Published weekly by The Saturday Review Co., Inc., 25 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y. Noble A. Cathcart, President and Treasurer; Henry Seidel Canby, Vice-President and Chairman; Amy Loveman, Secretary.

Subscription rates per year, postpaid in the U. S. and Pan-American Postal Union, $3.50; in Canada, $5; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere $4.50. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 9. No. 15.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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The Jaw Bone of the Lion

GOD'S ANGRY MAN. By LEONARD EHRLICH. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT
Author of "John Brown's Body"

A GOOD many of our recent biographies or semi-biographies—or biografictions—whatever you choose to call them—have rather like Mark Twain's reconstruction of the dinosaur, "three bones and a dozen barrels of plaster." The author might not always take the trouble to find out just what his subject did and when he did it—for that often requires a tiresome amount of research. But, as regards what the subject thought and felt, there the author was not merely all-wise but all-seeing. A note in a diary, "Got feet wet walking to Burford's Hole for eggs," would turn into a three-page prose-poem on the beauties and terrors of adolescence beneath the rain-washed skies of an English April. Famous contemporaries whom the subject had never met would be summoned from the grave to tell what they might have thought of him if they had ever known who he was. A few footnotes, a dash of Freud, thick paper, a dashing jacket—and "Passion on the Wind, or The Life of Chester A. Arthur" was ready for the trade.

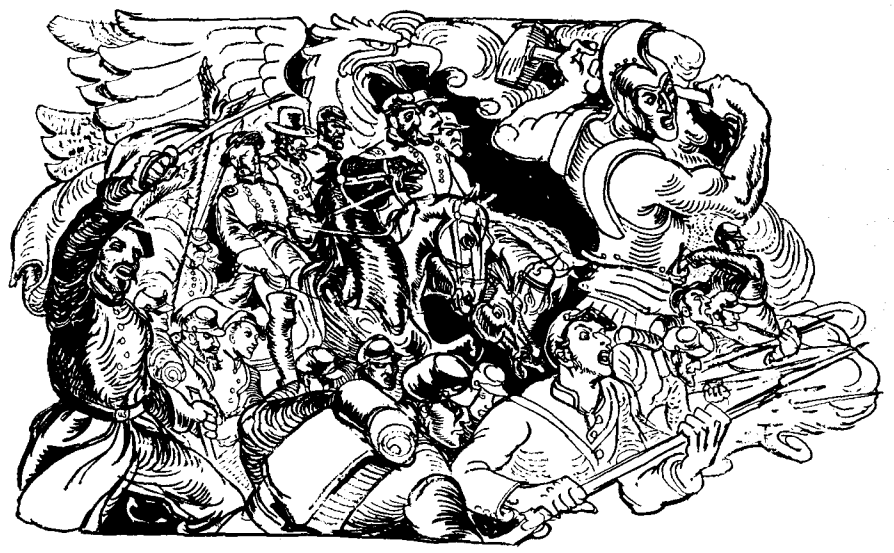
Mr. Ehrlich, fortunately for himself and his readers, does not belong to this school. "God's Angry Man" is a novel, honestly announced as such. It will not and is not meant to replace the Villard biography of John Brown. But it has a great deal of the soundness and pith of all good biography in it. There is nothing flimsy about it—it possesses both solidity and a great deal of fire.

Nor are these excellent qualities reserved for the character of John Brown himself. The whole extraordinary clan comes to life in these pages, the dead, the living, the mad, the ancestors, the descendants; the children of wrath and flame. Sometimes, it is true, Mr. Ehrlich's somewhat rhapsodic style tends to make them all talk with the same mouth. But, in general, they are living and breathing creatures, from Owen Brown the elder, the abstemious giant who first married into madness, to Austin, the four-year-old child who was buried at night near a cholera-ravaged town on the Missouri because John Brown whistled his sons to Kansas to fight and slay for the Lord. Mad Frederick; Watson, the wheel-horse; handsome, rebellious Oliver; Owen who escaped from the raid and Salmon who did not go; Jason and John; they are all here, the sons and daughters, with their wives and husbands and children. John Brown's second wife is here, the rugged, laborious, silent Mary Day—and the shadow of his first wife, Dianthe, the plain girl who bore him five children and died not sane. And with them are Thoreau, the lay-hermit, and Forbes, the charlatan, pink-faced Gerrit Smith and dark-browed young Higginson, the bitter figure of Mahala Doyle, and all the men of the raid from Kagi to "Emperor" Green.

It is a packed book, full of character and incident, full of vividness and excitement. But over it all lies the long shadow of one man—John Brown himself. It is a tribute to Mr. Ehrlich to say that we get from his book something of the impact that personality made on friend, ally, and enemy alike. The man was a Fate for his family and a Fate, in one way or another, for most of the men who came into any sort of contact with him. The sons resist and rebel, the daughters suffer and endure, the strangers blow hot and cold. Yet, in the end, men follow, inexorably drawn. The strong wills are conquered by the stronger—philanthropists conspire—clergymen plot mad rescues—the assassin who rocked his children to sleep with a hymn walks straight at last when there is nothing before him but the grave.

Mr. Ehrlich has chosen to begin his story in Kansas at the time of the Pottawatomie massacre and hews a fairly straight path from there to the end, with occasional cutbacks to earlier events. An interlude, "Deep in the Remembering Blood," paints the hard and lonely boyhood. The dubious years as a farmer tanner, wool-dealer, real-estate speculator are practically omitted—quite justifiably from Mr. Ehrlich's point of view though they are necessary material for biography. The attack on Harper's Ferry, the trial, the execution, the funeral, are excellently described. In general, Mr. Ehrlich claims with justice that his narrative "moves scrupulously within a frame of historical fact." He has, as he admits, taken certain liberties with minor characters and lesser events. As an instance, Townsley is renamed Townsend and given a dramatic death for the purposes of the narrative. There are other alterations and interpretations. But they do not alter the main current of the story—it runs as it did, a doomed and fateful stream.

The prose of the novel is vivid and rhythmic. It drops, at times, into Whitmanesque exclamations and, at its worst, is apt to get somewhat clotted. At other times, particularly in "Deep in the Remembering Blood" and the first and last sections, it attains both beauty and intensity. I am not going to say that "God's Angry Man" is the book of the season or the book of the year or the most astonishing book since the last astonishing book, for we are all tired of these phrases. But it is a remarkable and able first novel and its author someone to watch.



A DRAWING BY JAMES DAUGHERTY.
From Stephen Vincent Benét's "John Brown's Body."

The Love of Brothers

SONS OF THE MARTIAN. By DONALD C. PEATTIE. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

MR. PEATTIE'S novel is somewhat like a game of chess. The opening moves are formal and not unfamiliar; the subsequent development has an air of calculation and foresight; the intention, perhaps, is to create an "imitation" of that unfinished game in which we are all pieces and whose players we have never identified. There have been other novels of this kind—novels which, if they never achieved the tragic finality of "checkmate," did give to the various manœuvres, however precise, an astonishing emotional content. But Mr. Peattie's game has one grave drawback: he has deprived it of its subtlest attack and its most implacable defence. It is a game without pawns.

When Neil McVicker comes uncertainly through the dusk of a Mediterranean night to the lighted windows of "Ad Astra," and sees three women in a golden room and hears the strains of music, the atmosphere is already burdened with mystery. Neil is an American from Wisconsin, he has come to "Ad Astra" to learn something, and the first thing he learns is that the pianist is his half brother.

These two, Neil McVicker and Anton Karlicek, are the "sons of the Martian." The "Martian" is Virgile Lamarck, a great French astrophysicist, who has divided his life between a passion for beauty and a passion for science. Twenty-five years ago Neil's mother divorced him: she was a good American girl and she could not stomach his affair with Maria Karlicek, Anton's mother. Neil McVicker, christened Jean-Jacques Lamarck and renamed after his Wisconsin stepfather, has come back to find out what it is all about.

The situation, if not very original, is certainly not without promise. But Mr. Peattie is an inventive writer: and invention is a Greek, most treacherous when it bears gifts. Let us look at these characters. The "Martian" is little short of an Einstein; the illegitimate Anton is a pianist of international renown; the legitimate Neil has a small but brilliant reputation for "plant pathology"; Maria Karlicek is beautiful enough to make her own son stop eating; and there is Karen Braun, a girl of mixed blood and exquisite appearance. . . .

Confronted with this formidable array of genius and beauty Mr. Peattie betrays some natural embarrassment. Such people must be treated with reverence. If the actions of the book are to be simple and precise, the emotions must be complex and Olympian. And so upon the surface of his tale he erects an obscure and pretentious dialectic, a crooked ladder of "fine" phrases, by which his characters—climbing page by page—disappear at last into the dimmest unreality.

But there is one ray of hope. The "Martian" conveniently dies, and from the subsequent grief two characters emerge. They are not very important people, and hitherto they have taken their cue from the others, and gone about their tasks with an air of impoverished glamor. Now something splendid happens to them—a sort of descent or incarnation: they become ordinary people. Their names are Clotilde, a young French girl, and Tante Henriette, the "Martian's" sister: and Mr. Peattie handles them with real wisdom and real dexterity.

He is, of course, in no position to let this pair intrude too much: there is no room for pawns. His theme is brotherly love, and with the "Martian" out of the way Anton and Neil, who present so clearly the two sides of their father's character, are drawn closer and closer together. Then Karen Braun, who loves Anton but marries Neil, almost breaks up this relationship, for Anton cannot resist his passion for her; and the two brothers engage in murderous combat in their father's abandoned observatory. Karen fortunately takes herself off, realizing that brotherly love such as this is too great to be tampered with: and Anton and Neil are reconciled, apparently for ever.

It seems to me that characters like these are characters which fancy conceives and knowledge rejects; that Mr. Peattie is still an amateur in experience. (Style is a lesser consideration, for a bad style, though it may deface, can never ruin a story—and it is quite possible that Mr. Peattie's English is the effect of embarrssment.) But there is a good deal of hope for Mr. Peattie. If in his next book he will bring his characters down from their rubbishy Olympus, and create them after the simple image of Clotilde and Tante Henriette, we shall all be praising him. For if he does that, he will have become a novelist.

The fortieth anniversary of the beginning of the literary life of Maxim Gorki is being widely celebrated in Russia.

Herrick's Buttered Ale

THE SHADOW FLIES. By ROSE MACAULAY. New York: Harper & Bros. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

THIS long and beautiful book is reserved for a rather special group of readers, to whom it will give exquisite pleasure. It is a novel about the poet Robert Herrick and his friends—yes, sturdy old Parson Herrick of Dean Prior in "Denshire," with whom Miss Macaulay implies some distant kinship in her dedication. Her brilliant versatility, which has ranged from social satires and detective stories to fantasies and studies of religious poetry, has never been more finely shown than here. She has undertaken the almost impossible task of introducing such actual figures as Milton, Cowley, Crashaw, John Cleveland, Sir Kenelm Digby, Sir John Suckling, and making them move and talk in vivid reality. Such savory dialogue could only have come from one who is not only a skilled novelist but also a diligent student of the seventeenth century. To the hurried or uninstructed reader some of the conversations—particularly those dealing with religious and political controversy in Cambridge—will seem over-long; but I venture to think that the Sucklings and Clevelands themselves would recognize its flavor. It is pleasant to find so contemporary a word as *nitwit*, for example, customary in 1640. Miss Macaulay tells us that she has allowed her characters to employ only words, phrases, and idioms that were demonstrably used at the time in which they lived.

The story is simple. We begin with old Robin Herrick at his parsonage in Devonshire—with his sister-in-law keeping house for him; his maid Prew and spaniel Tracy known to all lovers of his verse. The Julia of the carnal poems is now, alas, only a memory. The life of the parish, the grizzling parson's struggles with his flock, are deliciously portrayed. The heroine of the tale is little Julian Conybeare, daughter of the free-minded Dr. Conybeare and pupil of the parson in her Latin studies. The neighborhood is disrupted by a tragic witch-hunt, in which Dr. Conybeare incurs dangerous hostility by sheltering a poor, distracted old beldame. Parson and doctor take young Julian and her friend Meg to Cambridge to visit their brothers who are in college there. The child Julian, sensitive young nymph of poetry and learning, is seduced by witty John Cleveland, her brother's tutor. In a fight between Cleveland and Kit Conybeare the girl is accidentally killed.

This is a bald, crude, inept suggestion of a rich and fragrant book, which will go permanently on the shelves of literature as required reading for lovers of the seventeenth century. Many a scholar has been doctored for a thesis with far less loving and understanding ken of that period. The section dealing with life in Cambridge, then such a hive of buzzing poetry and politics and imbrangled in religious bickers, is long but priceless in color to any lover of the old town. How agreeable to find Herrick and his friends lodging above the bookseller's in "Petty Cury" (Petits Ecuries)—which is surely the shop we all know now as Heffer's. And you meet young John Milton, up in Cambridge for a performance of "Comus"; see Sir Kenelm in his laboratory concocting powders of sympathy; Oliver Cromwell just elected burgess. Old Herrick, finally deciding to get his rustic verses published (he is nettled that the young sparks think them something old-fashioned), still has an eye for a quean, and a taste for warm buttered ale. This book will give great joy to its own kind of readers: it has the good flavor of that same buttered ale.

It has always been the regulation at Somerset House (says *John o' London's Weekly*) that anybody who wants to see a typewritten copy of a will must pay one shilling, but if he wants to see the original will he must pay two. The only exception was Shakespeare's will, which could be inspected for only one shilling. But now the tradition has been broken, and Shakespeare has been brought into line with everybody else.

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*A Letter to Poets**

By LOUIS UNTERMEYER

IT is not the poets unborn in some remote reach of time whom I am addressing in Whitman's hortatory phrase, but the poets barely emerging from our colleges and still submerged in the high schools. You—if I may make the address direct—may be Whitman's spiritual grandchildren, but you will not fulfil his personal and patriarchal appeal. You will mock us, your immediate predecessors; you will scorn our mean pretentiousness and our elaborate simplicities. You will, probably, during your apprentice-years, imitate us. But, in the end, you will do anything but justify us—you will (quite properly, I believe), deny us. This denial will not be the old revolt of one generation against the other; it will be an affirmative declaration; it will be the sign of your salvation.

I would like you to examine two recent and representative anthologies—both (so we may avoid controversy regarding our compatriots) prepared and published in England. One collection* includes forty-six living poets whose average age is close to fifty; the other** is composed of nine contemporaries who are in their thirties and some not yet out of their twenties. Fifty-five poets in all—and only one poet among them is represented in the pages of both books. Since poets are the unofficial historians of an age, these two volumes should furnish a fairly accurate and rather complete picture of English life today. But not even the most chauvinistic Englishman would pretend that they do. The first relies on a set of images and attitudes so exploited that they no longer have authority; the second attempts to supplant these devices with a new set of symbols—machine-cut symbols which the poets seem to be employing a little too determinedly and with which, one suspects, they will never feel at home. The first is bound to "the great tradition"; the second is tied to a program of experiment. This is the double-horned dilemma of two generations of poets, a dilemma that is accentuated when you shift your scrutiny from England to America. Here the quandary is emphasized by our increased energy and wider range. But, with a few notable exceptions, here, too, you must choose between a too-fluent prettiness and a forced ugliness, between an outworn idiom and a speciously "up to date" vocabulary, between allusions which are so familiar that you cannot rouse to them and allusions so private or recondite that you cannot even recognize them.

You must solve this problem. You must win back the audience we have turned away. You must, first of all, evolve a set of counters or abstractions or allegories which will bear the inflection of the times without relying on the fashionable accent of the moment. You will have to restore the quality of living speech which most of us have forgotten—not the well-rounded phrase-making which is only the trade-mark of verse—but that untheatrical tone, that compelling pitch which cannot be defined and which can never be mistaken.

But, like most contemporary poets, I have begun by stressing the last thing present in the poet's consciousness. Long before you solve your problems of tone and technique, you will have to determine what the poet really is. If you contemplate my generation at all, you may be led to ask what the poet was and what has he become. What he has become is—I say it with the obvious reservations—only too apparent. It might be better, though more painful, to remember what he was.

He was, primarily, a spokesman—a spokesman in the exact sense that he spoke not only about his fellows but for them. He was the projection of their unuttered hopes and fears, the brooding embodiment of their common but inarticulate emotions. He was, as Wordsworth observed in his preface to the second edition of "Lyrical Ballads," "a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, imbued with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature and a more comprehensive soul than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him, delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them." This is the antithesis of the poet today. For "enthusiasm and tenderness" we have given you a tired disillusion whose self-protection is a dryness of utterance and a hardness of spirit; the "lively sensibility" has become an excessive concern with personal maladjustments, petty malaises, and ingrowing "individuality." Where the poet of the past was glad to share and quick to express the passions and foibles of those about him, the poet of today is proud only of his differences. It is no longer the self who desires a closer connection with and a "greater knowledge of human nature"; it is, as Virginia Woolf wrote, "a self that sits *alone in a room* at night with the blinds drawn . . . much less interested in what we have in common than what he has apart." In short, the poet, for all his volubility, no longer believes in his high purpose nor in himself. He seeks to charm or pique or entertain; he cannot exalt. He no longer delights in the passionate "goings-on of the Universe" nor is he "habitually impelled to create them" for the act of creation is an act of faith, and he has no faith in them. He does not really believe—and I may as well come out with the stilted and inevitable phrase—in the destiny of man.

I say all of this—much of it platitudinous—to you because I suspect that you will be neither crushed nor convinced by our skepticisms and that you will return to the welding of clean form and intense feeling which other generations have recognized as essential poetry. It was easy for the ancients, I have been told. The Homeric world was filled with inexplicable dangers and capricious dooms, but it was also rich with vast, even immortal possibilities. Man might be caught in the web of Fate but no one questioned that Fate thought him worth catching. However else he was predestined, he was not doomed to insignificance: any man might become a hero, a demi-god, a bright star in some uncharted constellation. If man suffered strange metamorphoses, so did his gods. Without man, the universe was unthinkable.

Two thousand years later the sense of man's importance, without which no great art can be achieved, was still maintained. The world of Shakespeare, beset by continuous wars, confused by unpredictable plagues and hazardous changes, still counted on the interest of its Creator. Man might well die for his God since his God had died for him. Witches and devils were in this world, but so were angels; and it did not diminish man's dignity to think it was for him they fought. Earth was the center of the universe and man was the natural ruler of earth. Man was "the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals." All things made obeisance and ministered and moved about him.

The stars have us to bed
Night draws the curtain which the sun withdraws;
Music and light attend our head.
All things unto our flesh are kind
In their descent and being; to our mind
In their ascent and cause.

In the last fifty and particularly in the last fifteen years we have changed all that for you. We have, with a few pronouncements, magnified the scale of life and minimized man's part in it. We tell you the universe is without a center and probably without a system; the earth is a speck of sand in an emptiness of space; man is a loose collocation of atoms, chiefly water with a few grains of salt, less important to a planet than a cut-worm to a cabbage. A novelist-scientist projects the current popular dogma: "Man is an animal among many, precariously situated on the crust of a planetary fragment that obeys the gravitational impulses of one of millions of dwarf stars of one of the many galactic systems. His place in the universe, from the standpoint of dimension, is unimpressive; his 'importance' in any non-material way is a subject not suited to speculation." His life, as a representative and respected poet has phrased it, is "meaningless in the weave of the world," his civilization is "a transient sickness," his nature is "ignoble in its quiet times," his pleasures are contemptible; the remotest outer worlds are "fleeing the contagion of consciousness that infects this corner of space." There is either no God or a God so impersonal and abstract that we can expect no more aid from him than from a mathematical formula.

This is what we have given you. This is why the poetry of the geographically small world was sure of a large and participating audience, while the poetry of a far greater world reaches a smaller and a smaller number of readers. That is why the impulse to sweep the spirit of rebellion into odes and the spirit of satire into laughing octaves has degenerated into poetry written only for a few other poets, to parade a manner or perfect a technique. It is the reason why so many modern poets, unable to turn with assurance to the world, turn, frustrated, upon themselves.

It is your privilege to deny it. Forgive me if I address you like an attorney for the defense pleading with the jury, but the decision is ours no longer. It is you who are about to speak. It is you who will be able to deride the latest catalogue of scientific negations and the shrunk stature on which we grotesquely pride ourselves. You will find another religion than our so reasonable and so ridiculous substitute. It may be an international mysticism or a revitalized agrarianism; it may well be communism. But, whatever the form, discovering a set of new ideals, you will rediscover your ancient function. You will attest the dignity of man. You will celebrate his rich and varied potentialities instead of your own small singularities. Larger themes than ours await and demand you; dramas on a huge scale are ready to your hand; never before have great issues so needed to be sung. You will coördinate the seeming stereotypes of Nature with the ingenuities of the mind; there will be, in your work, no enervating struggle between the real and the romantic, but a fusion of the two. If the lamented virtues—Honor, Justice, Faith, Nobility—have gone out of the world, you will know that they can be continually recreated. You have the instrument within you. "Poets to come! Orators, singers, musicians to come! You, a new brood, native, athletic, continental, greater than before known. Arouse!" You must prove the past with a new emphasis; you must restore that world which we allowed to ruin itself with scarcely a protest. You, poets to come, must turn your back on our negations; you must justify every affirmative poet who prepared you.

* NEW ENGLISH POEMS. A Miscellany of Contemporary Verse Never Before Published. The Collection Made by Lascelles Abercrombie. London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 1932.

** NEW SIGNATURES. Poems by Several Hands. Hogarth Living Poets Number 24. Collected by Michael Roberts. London: The Hogarth Press. 1932.

. . . All the philosophical books I ever read sooner or later come within sight of the question: Who made God?

Some of them see it looming up in the distance, and duck it, hurrying through alleys and byways, afraid to confront it. Others get within speaking distance of it, and acknowledge that they don't know. I have no respect for these; they ought to know; that's where everything starts, and not to know is the grossest sort of ignorance. The only books for which I have the slightest respect are the ones which boldly assert the only possible answer: God made God.

(. . .)

Having started with that premise, it is really idle to go on with a book of philosophy, for the premise is also a conclusion. Some minds, fascinated by details, like to play with notions as to why, when, where, and how it happened; whether it is still happening, whether it can ever stop; whether, if it stops, it will happen all over again, and the like. Personally, I don't care to have the large and simple proposition cluttered up with details in the foreground.

(. . .)

Having settled this week the main question of the ages, there is no reason why I should not go on and settle a minor question which has puzzled millions of people: Who made the Devil?

The answer is: Theology made the Devil.

But who made Theology?

The answer is: The Devil made Theology.

Now run away and don't bother me with any more questions. If you don't have sense enough to realize that I have settled everything that humanity needs to know, you wouldn't have sense enough to appreciate my further answers.

(. . .)

Don Marquis

The biggest publishing house in the world is the "Gosizdat," or State Publishing Agency of the U. S. S. R., which produces fifty per cent of the books published in Russia and during the first ten years of its existence issued 491,700,000 books and pamphlets. According to Theodor Seibert, in his new book, "Red Russia," ninety per cent of its output is nothing but Bolshevik propaganda. "The propagandist aims of Soviet book trade could hardly be disclosed more clearly," Mr. Seibert writes, "than they are disclosed in a ukase from the highest authority in Soviet Russia" on the type of literature that is to be fostered.

The Saturday Review Recommends

This Group of Recent Books:

GOD'S ANGRY MAN. By LEONARD EHRLICH. *Simon & Schuster.*
A novel, "moving scrupulously within a frame of historical fact," which takes John Brown as its hero.

THE ROMAN WAY. By EDITH HAMILTON. *Norton.*
A sympathetic and illuminating analysis of Roman culture.

EXPERIENCE AND ART. By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH. *Smith & Haas.*
A study of the differences and the relationships between nature and art.

This Less Recent Book:

JOHN BROWN'S BODY. By STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT. *Doubleday, Doran.*
A distinguished narrative poem, which would be most interesting to reread in connection with "God's Angry Man."

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The Bowling Green

Human Being

XL. ACCIDENTS

SO we come down toward the later years, said Hubbard. I get flash pictures that I don't know exactly where to fit in. How does one suggest, in the poor brevities of print, the long, slow rub of time? Minnie says she could see that something was happening to Richard. He was more silent after the Accident, as they always called it. He was going past a garage where a truck was unloading gasoline into a vent in the pavement. The gas was in metal drums, which they rocked to and fro over the inlet to empty them. Somehow a spark must have been struck, there was an explosion. He was quite badly hurt by the blast, but able to get home in a taxi. Minnie, not knowing how serious the injuries might be, was terribly anxious, but Lucille would give her no satisfaction on the phone. Richard was kept in bed for a week, and Lucille nursed him with generous care, but when Minnie brought up some important business papers to be signed, she was not allowed to see him. She was kept standing in the lobby.

This reminded Minnie of her own grotesque mishap. It ought to cure me of the bad habit of going to the office in off hours. she said. It was a Washington's Birthday, the office was closed. But Minnie, who had no use for holidays, had gone there to see if some expected mail had arrived. A number of letters were sprinkled on the floor where the carrier had shot them through the slit of the door. Without bothering to go to the master light-switch, which was in the Reception Room, she sat down on the floor to examine the envelopes in the dim light. As usual on holidays, the office-boy had left the transom open for the parcel-post-man to throw in packages. She heard footsteps in the hall outside but paid no attention. Suddenly she received a violent blow on the arm and shoulder. It was a heavy parcel sent over by mail from the factory—samples of the Diana ash-tray in new colors. She was lame for weeks. It would have been a good joke on me if I'd been killed by a bunch of my own ash-trays.

Sometimes, for a change, he went to the office by subway instead of on the L. Mostly, like any disciplined citizen, he took it for granted: stood cramped in the rush-hour throng, snatching what glimpses of his newspaper he could. Then there were moments of vision when he saw the experience in its contrasting aspects, both true. Which will be more accurate to say, Hubbard asks? Shall I say he went down through that hell of cruel pressures, into a world of senseless stone, a life of small chicane? Shall I say that, exhilarated by the dark roar of haste, heartened by that mass of patient enduring purposes, he reached his downtown heaven of interest and curiosity? One small episode he mentioned. At 72nd Street, changing from the local, there was just a quick chance of catching the express across the platform. As the doors opened, a dapper Chinaman—a prosperous-looking fellow in a handsome soft hat and fur-collared overcoat—leapt out first, roughly elbowing his neighbors in his excitement. It was the only time I ever saw a Chinaman rude, said Richard.

But I think he was glad to have lived in the era of the subway, the airplane, the motor car, the radio, the electric ice-box. The radio, which had begun humbly by attaching one wire to the bedspring and another to the wash-stand to hear some cheerful concert from Newark, was now a serious affair. Eastern Standard Eternity was carefuly parcelled out in fifteen-minute lots; the kilocycles, after so many ages of irresponsibility, suddenly found themselves burdened with heavy cargoes of toothpaste and ginger ale. At home the Roes kept the machine spieling as much as possible; it was an excellent preventive of thought. "What *is* a kilocycle?" Lucille asked once. "As I understand it," said Richard, "it's a unit of frequency making one thousand alternations a second." "Like Daddy trying to make up his mind over Christmas shopping," said Gladys. He lay abed, after the Accident, and heard space sounding its daily diapason, from the morning's kitchen counsel to the saxophone and saraband of bedtime. He had wondered whether he ought to buy a little slice of that airy nothing for the Roe pen. But after lying a whole day, helpless under the stroke of incessant petition and advice, he concluded that the ether was overcrowded. There's not enough white space in it, he thought.—Suddenly, in the middle of a rather pretty song—something about *My Heart Stood Still*—there was a break. *Signing off for an S.O.S. call,* said the announcer. A ship was in trouble at sea, appealing for help.

Yes, the web of life was being drawn very tight.

Gladys had reached the age of twenty-one, and felt she was entitled to an occasional cocktail. Hubbard tried the experiment of providing one, in the hope of eliciting new testimonies. Biographers, it appears, have no scruples of conscience. He took her up to Hyacinthe's penthouse, where the vegetation was now so luxurious it almost threatened hay fever. They sat under an awning, a warm midsummer night. There had been an eclipse of the sun that afternoon; almost total in New York, and Gladys was much impressed.

"You know, it sort of gave me the heeby-jeebies," she said. "When I saw that spooky gray twilight, and realized we'd never see it again in our lifetime, and yet they know exactly when it will happen next—oh, I don't know, it kind of made me want not to be such a sap about things."

"It makes even tougher people than you paw the air," Hubbard remarked. "A total eclipse of the sun is the one thing that always makes the New York *Times* sentimental on the front page. Did you see their article this morning?"

"I haven't seen the *Times* since the day of Daddy's funeral. That was his paper. After he died Mother switched over to the *American.*"

Gladys was really a pretty girl in her light evening frock, and on her narrow pencilled brows there was an unwonted apparition of thought. In a queer way Hubbard seemed to see the ghost of Richard shining through her, appealing for justification.

"Mother's really a scream about it all," she said. "She's gotten round now to talking about 'my dear husband' and 'when Richard was alive.' She's shocked when I tell her that's hooey. When he was alive she thought he was an absolute bum. Didn't I hear her say so often enough? I had that idea pretty well sold to me, but I've been thinking about it. The eclipse today, all that dope about shadows 238,000 miles long, gave me a Big-Time view of things all of a sudden. The last time there was an eclipse I remember Daddy wanted to take me to the Museum to see some model of how it all happens, and I told him bushwa. Funny, today I was thinking I almost wish I could look at him again, just size him up for myself, see what he really was like.—I wouldn't be surprised we might have been fond of each other."

Hubbard's glass was empty; he would have been glad to have it filled, to help him digest these confidences. But he was afraid to move, lest he disturb the equilibrium. What far reaches of the universe impinged upon his theme: from solar eclipses to a stick of chewing gum in a Greyhound bus.

"I'm not saying Mother didn't get some bad breaks. For a long time I didn't know what it was all about, but she talked so much of course I got wise. If only Aunt Hay would have let her alone. Gosh, how I used to hate seeing her come round. It always meant trouble afterward. My God. if I didn't know more than that pair about how to handle a man. It was pathos!

"I guess maybe parents *are* a bit pathetic, if you sit down and think about them. Gosh, they can gum up anything. Look at Mother. What's she going to do with herself for the next quarter of a century? Poor soul, she's fed up already. It's terrible for a woman not to have anybody she can hang things on. I think she had an idea that bridge expert was going to proposition her, but she's kidding herself. I want her to start a dress shop; even if she loses money it'll give her something to think about. As long as she keeps her figure a woman can be happy with plenty of mirrors around.—I guess I'm talking too much. You're a nice, patient sort of person, not mean and cussèd like me. What luck did *you* have in picking out parents?"

Hubbard was startled at this sudden pass. He dodged it by summoning the waiter. He was almost frightened by the poor child's candor. It came to him that it is not wise or safe to peer too far into the mystery of other lives.

"I was thinking of a silly little thing," she said. "Probably I oughtn't to mention it. It was when I was about fourteen; I was working hard at high school, and I guess I was a bit jumpy anyhow. I didn't sleep very well, and if I heard anybody talking late at night it used to drive me crazy. I woke up and heard them talking. I rushed into Mother's room, Daddy was kneeling by the bed mumbling away. 'Damn you,' I said, 'get out and stop bothering Mother.' He got up and went back to his own room without a word. Poor fish, I think he was only trying to tell her he loved her.

"If I ever grow up, I'm going to see that I have some privacy."

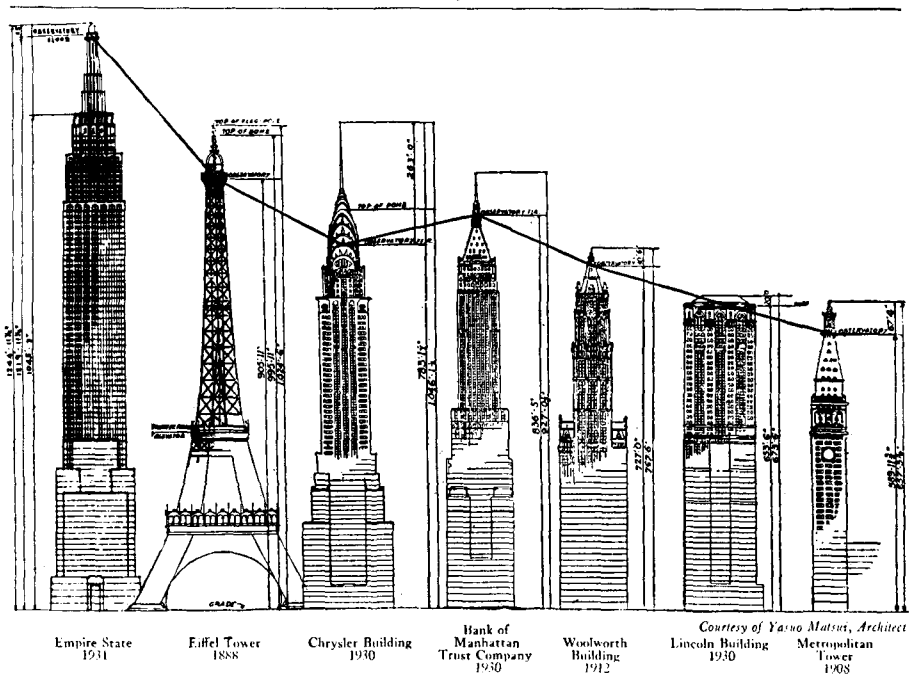
"To the next eclipse, my dear," said Hubbard. "Even if we're not here to see it."

"Yes, hoping they'll all have better sense by then."

Gladys was thoughful as they went uptown in a cab. "Some day I'd like to meet your friend Miss Hutzler," she said.

(To be continued)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.



COMPARATIVE HEIGHT OF LEADING SKYSCRAPERS.

From "The Building of the City" (Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs.)

The Cat out of the Bag

NOT TO BE REPEATED—MERRY-GO-ROUND OF EUROPE. Anonymous. New York: Smith & Long. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by HELEN HILL

PERHAPS the most tangible evidence of the post-war change in the personnel of the politically great is the change in the people to whom we go to get our gossip about them. In the first flush of a world made safe for democracy and in the spirit of open covenants openly arrived at, we read, "Now It Can Be Told," and felt assured that the spirit of the great open spaces had blown away the codes and protocol of a world in which much that closely concerned the *salus populi* had been regarded as "Better Left Unsaid." Slightly later, reaction, admission that the democratic world has also its codes, came in the form of "You Can't Print That," but it was after all only a pseudo-reaction, since That was printed. During the last few years private comment on public life has become a stock form of publication.

In the days of kings and dignity, such comment was confined to memoirs, published only when death or intervening generations had removed the personages in their pages from the center of relevance. The ideal people from whom to obtain such items were the brilliant women who accompanied, and at times, in a quiet way, made, the makers of the events and follies which they recorded. Now, in the days of politicians and democracy, such comment must be hot as the spot-news of the afternoon extra, for the title, Once a Politician, would carry none of the glamor of Once a Grand Duke. By consequence, the ideal people from whom to obtain such items are the brilliant newspapermen who accompany, and at times, in a quiet way, make, the makers of the events and follies which they are coming increasingly to record. (There was an interim period of mirrors and dusters, but they proved an inadequate compromise between accurate reflection and the real dirt.)

"Not To Be Repeated" is a broadcast of the type of confidential information which one obtains upon arrival in Europe from the first foreign correspondent with whom one sits consuming whiskey-and-soda, wine, beer, or coffee (according to local geography) in whatever café is endorsed by the exotic press. True to its subtitle, "The Merry-Go-Round of Europe," the gossip has more to do with the circuses than with the bread upon which the Old World is attempting to sustain itself. It is up-to-the-minute, and will keep many a dinner party from being dull. And the Washington hostess who referred to Signor Grandi's as "those *liquid* eyes" (her husband inserted that to him they had appeared to be merely *wet*) will rise in rapid indignation at the intimations of a Grandi Gang. Enthusiasts for Russia will be harsh at finding only a sentence or two of the Durantied optimism of their dreams. Readers to whom the description of Austria in terms of the *Foehn* seems deft will wonder whether the author of the chapter on Geneva did not express the winter of his discontent under influence of the *bise.*

The German section, and to a considerable extent the British, differs from the rest of the book. Just as in some of the more progressive merry-go-rounds at European fairs a few of the steeds have been replaced by automobile models, they represent more the motors of modern society than the antics of its cavalry. The discussion of the Reich is a clear-cut résumé of its general situation, somewhat in the Knickerbocker manner, and, from a purely political angle, the British is almost as good.

As an example of the modern method of purveying knowledge to the knowing, the book is a success.

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In the Air and On Sea

The Kosciuszko Squad

WINGS OVER POLAND. By KENNETH MALCOLM MURRAY. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by ELLIOT CHESS

MR. MURRAY justifies his selection of material in a few hurried words of introduction: "For continuity, clarity of action, and because of sheer limitations of space, many of the side incidents of the (Kosciuszko) Squadron have been left out." And one has a feeling of being left out. From the first his book is but a superficial tale of the eleven Americans and two Poles who fought with Poland against the Bolshevists in one of the strangest of all armed conflicts.

Hectic years, those of '19, '20, and '21, for the universe was again revolving upon the head of a pin. The invincible Russian cavalry, under the command of the great Budienny, thirty thousand strong, Tartar, Lett, and Mongol, were trailing toward the Polish frontier. That was in '20, and the beginning of that strange warfare, "for," as Mr. Murray writes, "up until the present time no other military aviation unit has ever flown out of a railroad base; none has ever fought a four-hundred-mile rear-guard action in the midst of a general retreat; no other flying foreign force has seen, as a unit, such long and continuous service."

And so he writes his book, a constant clash between airmen and Cossacks, of the wings of Poland against the same breed of heterogeneous sabremen that played havoc with Napoleon at the Beresina, leaving him under the shadow of Elba, for he could never justify his losses, nor his discouragement. After a hundred and thirty years, the Russian cavalry had to justify their losses, and Budienny did so in his own simple way. "I have no planes. I shall not answer for the outcome of my movements."

There indeed is drama, and though the pages of "Wings over Poland" have a glamorous, superficial quality, they have lost much in the telling. The reader doesn't suspect that Graves was a tubercular who knew he was going to die. I remember he came to me once and said, "I won't last, Chesski, what the hell." He loved a girl in England. And Graves wanted to die, for he was all eaten inside; I remember days when we looked at one another and thought, "Who next? We can't last forever, there are too many of them." I remember men turning "yellow" as hell, and hoping to God for a better fare than flying; I remember the planes whose wings bulged out like balloons, hardly safe on the ground, yet we flew them; I remember the vodka that would burn your damned guts out, and flights made when drunk. Yet the reader is never told of these things; I remember the two girls who came one after the other to Kelly's open grave, and their tears, and their meeting, and all of us wondering; I remember of going to Corsi and saying, "I got a date—you take my trip today." And Corsi flew; I remember a forty mile sector left open one tragic day, and all because of a dark-eyed girl with a lusty smile. How strange all of this seems in retrospect; the news boys shouting their wares down along the deserted streets of Lvov, yet they shouted news of victory, of Poland that was free! And the sound of their voices playing symphonies through the hallowed lanes where dead men walked under the shadow of the white Eagle of Poland.

Yes, indeed, there is much to regret, and it's too bad that Mr. Murray forgot the backhouse and the bedroom in his tale. Possibly it is the stroke of a censor's pen, or, more possibly, he knew the truth would have been stamped as preposterous.

"Wings over Poland" is readable, withal. It is fact that is stranger than fancy.

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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

A Shipmaster Speaks

IN GREAT WATERS. By CAPTAIN S. G. S. MCNEIL. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by DAVID W. BONE

IT is all to the good that an Atlantic Captain (or any other seafaring man for the matter of that) should be constrained to write of his experiences when, the cares and responsibilities of office removed by retiral, he has the leisure to devote to consideration of his course through life. I suppose the very best form of autobiography is that in which the reader is informed in clear detail of that course and, in the reading, gains a vivid impression of the personality of the author. This is such a book. It is undeniably honest and sincere. It contains the candid and outspoken reflections of an able shipmaster who, after forty-seven years of sea service, has retired from active command. Beginning his sea career in the square-rigged ships of the late 'eighties, serving as officer in many varied types of vessels, attaining to command of the most outstanding merchant ship of his day, he has surely a wealth of incident to serve him in preparation of his distinguished record. In "In Great Waters" Captain McNeil sets it all down with convincing emphasis.

Those who look for the not uncommon type of journalistic effort on the part of a retired Atlantic seafarer (in general, the shadow of a social register of Atlantic travel) will be pleasantly surprised at the quality of this volume, in particular at the proportions the author maintains in the varied sections of the book. The important incidents, the engagements and alarms that go to the making of sailor life, are properly enlarged, while but one chapter is devoted to the amenities of "the captain's table." The author is first and always a sailor, and perhaps that explains why, in his treatment of his subject matter, he steers well clear of extravagant and sonorous periods. His book is distinguished by its simple narrative form. It is much as though, in his cabin, Captain McNeil threw a leg over the arm of his chair as he recalled this incident or that and spoke of them without conscious effort; or, with both feet aggressively planted, vented the indignation that was felt—but not often voiced—by practically all merchant seamen who came under naval control during the war. A considerable section of the book is devoted to the author's war service in the Eastern Mediterranean and the thoughtful reader cannot but come to the conclusion that the best was not made of sailor material in that sphere of naval operations.

This autobiography reveals the author as a masterful personality. (No ill quality in a shipmaster.) There is much to arouse controversy in the book and the reviewer, being himself a professional seaman, can predict endless argument regarding it wherever seamen foregather. It is a pity—for liking of an excellent book—that the author includes such an incident as that recorded on page 135. One can readily understand that the master of the "fool" ship would have his own views of the manœuvers, particularly of the propriety of the narrator in steering east on the westbound track—in fog, of all weathers.

The closing chapters of the book are naturally concerned with the author's reflections upon the good of the service and his views are entitled to respect as coming from a seaman of his wide experience. But his advocacy of training in square sails for the future officers of the Merchants' Service is not quite convincing. He does not say that there is anything fundamentally wrong with the steam-trained officer. His experiences in the war, like mine, must have convinced him that the able-bodied sailor youth of today who knew nothing or little of "sticks and strings" put up a gallant show in his particular service—that of commanding the smaller mine-sweepers or the responsibility of watch officer in transports.

In summary, and recalling the fair weather and foul—material and immaterial—that he has met with in forty-seven sea years, Captain McNeil has this to say: "Would I go over it all again? If I were a boy, would I still go to sea? My answer is, 'Of course I would.' But not if I were a boy of the present day; only if I had my own time to go over again." Judgment in retrospect is invariably sound, but it is a good thing for all who enjoy the landward fleshpots that the sea has still the old appeal to the right lad, and, thank God, he heeds it in the same englamoured way that Captain McNeil did in 1884.

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SATURDAY REVIEW

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Points of View

Roses and Raspberries

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: I have just been reading the last issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. It was a delightful visit through the White House on which Mr. Morley took us in his article: "What the President Reads."

Not only what he reads was interesting but Mr. Morley's own very human touch about picking up from the logs the crumpled paper marked "chocolate cake" and his whimsical wish that "Mr. C. had not thought to carry his studs in a tin box that had once held typewriter ribbon."

But more seriously, I greatly admired the high and subtle charm of the thought: "Perhaps sometimes we need to balance our minds as well as balance the budget." And I also think that at this particular time there will be a great deal of influence in the remark on partisanship: "A good deal of it may be as unfair as to hold the captain of a line responsible for the weather encountered during the voyage."

The entire article was a pleasure.

CONSTANT SOUTHWORTH.
Southworth Press.

Portland, Me.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: Thank Mr. Morley for telling us so delightfully "What the President Reads." His pen picture was real enough to make me believe I had made the little journey with him and Mrs. Morley.

What we need even more than Marshall's five cent cigar or Adams's nickel are men of the Hoover type and writers, whose visions are not distorted, to give us a sympathetic understanding of them.

May I not be bold enough to say that this need is greater than the poem the President hopes to find?

CHARLES L. MORGAN.

Elizabeth, N. J.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: *Christopher Morley on Mr. Hoover's reading.* This is a magnificent "coup" in journalism. My warm congratulations!

HENRY LEACH,
Editor, *The Forum.*

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: As a reader since the days of the affiliation with the New York *Evening Post* I am writing to congratulate you on the September 24th number which I consider the best the *Review* has ever produced and I feel certain must rank among the best issues ever put out by an American literary review.

DOUGLAS MACKAY.

Lucerne-in-Quebec.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: Your September 24th number has been so popular with my friends that it has become too worn for further reading; I am sending twenty (20) cents in coin for two (2) additional copies.

DAN A. HULICK.

Greenville, S. C.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: Giving up my subscription to your *Review* a year ago, was a matter of real regret to me, and I have been hoping ever since then, to renew.

All my free spaces were then choked up with periodicals with no time to read them. Now I have a little more leisure and quite as much space, so I am enclosing my check for a year's subscription. My only reason for burdening you with a subscription is the pleasure of congratulating you on your success in producing a readable and stimulating magazine, and to assure you that a chance copy which came my way with the charming story of Christopher Morley's visit to the White House, put a finishing touch to my sense of deprivation as a non-subscriber!

JULIA S. BRISTOL.

New Haven, Conn.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: May I thank you for sharing your visit at the White House with us and also express the wish that it might be published, by itself, so it would reach a larger public?

MABEL FLETCHER.

New Canaan, Conn.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: *The Saturday Review* still continues its high standard and becomes more absorbing with each issue. Morley on Hoover I especially enjoyed.

GEORGE F. SCHERER.

New York.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: *The Saturday Review* deserves to be, and hereby is, severely censured for publishing such a bare-faced piece of Republican propaganda as Christopher Morley's "What the President Reads."

Whatever possessed you to print such a bit of moronic pabulum is beyond guess, but I do hope it was a "sizeable" subsidy from the Republican Party. The preliminary advertising for the article leads me to believe that it was.

Another insult of this nature to the intelligence of your readers, and I will cancel my subscription.

ANNA FEDOR MERRICK.

Eugene, Ore.

P.S.—My wife's objections to your political skull-duggery have my heartiest endorsement. I wish to add a word concerning the article itself. I consider it the worst—positively the worst writing I have seen. Words and paper would fail me were I to attempt a list of all the faults in it. The *Review* should hide its head for having so dragged its scholarly standard in the mire.

Perhaps Mr. Morley's elephant hide can be penetrated by my decision to use "What the President Reads" as a text in Bad Writing for my sophomores in English Composition. You might try aiming it at him.

PAT MERRICK.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: I wish to protest against a great periodical like the *Saturday Review* being permitted to be used for political propaganda. I refer, of course, to Mr. Morley's article in a recent number. A year ago, or a year from now, no one could have objected legitimately to its publication, but when it is given us at such length and featured so prominently in the midst of a heated political campaign, but one conclusion can be drawn.

May I identify myself as a long-time subscriber and constant reader of the *Review;* as one who admires it and enjoys it; as a particular admirer and constant reader of Mr. Morley, both in the *Review* and in his books; as a Democrat who is not keen about Roosevelt and has not yet made up his mind whether he will vote for Hoover as the lesser of two evils?

My only thought in writing this letter is to protest against this fine magazine, standing for the best in American life and art, being used for obvious political propaganda. I am profoundly disappointed.

X. Y. Z.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: If you and Chris Morley want to parade that White House "formula" on the front page of the *Review* there is probably no way to stop you, but you make yourselves mighty silly.

THOMAS R. GANILS.

Los Angeles, Calif.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: Mr. Christopher Morley has given me a great deal of pleasure as a columnist and as a novelist over a period of many years. The *Saturday Review,* likewise, since its first publication, has been a most pleasurable, enriching, and liberalizing weekly visitor.

The unpartisan quality of Mr. Morley's work, its detachment from particular events as also the general tone of liberality of the *Saturday Review* have both been particularly engaging and comforting in these troubled times.

The publication therefore of Mr. Morley's article on President Hoover on the front page of the last issue of the *Saturday Review* was like a blow in the face. If this article had appeared two years ago—or one year hence—it could have passed as merely literary. Coming in the midst of a closely contested campaign it is campaign material pure and simple. It has already been quoted at length by partisan newspapers favoring Mr. Hoover's candidacy and will be seized upon by all of his followers with delight.

Whatever the political opinions of your readers, the publication of such an article at such a time in a literary magazine is in extremely bad taste and to one of them, at least, most offensive. Two of my idols have fallen and have fallen very low and very hard.

REBA B. DIRLAM.

Hamden, Conn.

No. 4

The VIKING *Galley*

This season we're out to confute that persistent shibboleth that short stories never sell. We're armed with two deadly weapons in this war—one of them is THE HAUNTED MIRROR by Elizabeth Madox Roberts which will be published the middle of November, the other is THE SALUTATION by Sylvia Townsend Warner which, in addition to two complete novelettes, contains eleven short stories. This latter title is already proving that short stories can, do, and will sell.

THE SALUTATION

by SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER
Author of "Mr. Fortune's Maggot"

The title story of this volume takes one whom thousands of Miss Warner's admirers will recognize despite his anonymity and places him in the home of a South American gentlewoman who overwhelms him with her hospitality. "She has never been more the ingratiating stylist than she is in *The Salutation.*"—*The Phila. Record. Elinor Barley,* the other novelette in this collection, is the autobiography of a murderess written while she is awaiting execution. "Elinor Barley emerges as a vital and breathing figure, unmistakably kin to Moll Flanders and Jonathan Wild."—*N. Y. Eve. Post.* As for the other stories, "they are all of them gems of imagery, pathos and the essence of poetry."—*Phila. Public Ledger.* $2.50

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Peter Pan and Lear

TIRRA LIRRA. By LAURA E. RICHARDS. Foreword by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

OF course I had first learned my letters and wormed my way through Mother Goose conveniently hyphenated into single syllables, but literature began for me with *St. Nicholas* and music with "The *St. Nicholas* Song-Book." My first toy-theatre was used to present "Chris and the Wonderful Lamp" and I collected cigarette pictures to the tune of "Punky-doodle and Jollapin." Little did I care that the author of that insistent jingle was the daughter of Julia Ward Howe—children think no more of the names of authors than does the average reader—I could not even tell you that the words of "Punky-doodle and Jollapin" and that unforgettable refrain beginning "And every little wave had its nightcap on" were written by Laura E. Richards. But I treasured the syllables to the last inflection until high-school made me ashamed of them. Then the years blurred the outlines, the details were confused, and I forgot what happened to the frog who lived in a bog on the banks of Lake Okeefinokee; I could not recall anything about the sad little Cossack except that he lived by the river Don; I even ceased to remember the names, as well as the legend, of Mrs. Snipkin and Mrs. Wobblechin.

Now someone—evidently May Lamberton Becker, who furnishes this volume with a charming and intimate introduction—has urged Mrs. Richards to put into one volume the verses written more than forty years ago and several written the day before yesterday. Mrs. Richards, they tell me, is eighty-one years old. I do not believe it. Mrs. Richards is much older—as old, I would say, as Edward Lear—or much younger, younger even than Christopher Robin. One of her hands turns a moonstruck hurdy-gurdy; the other fingers the pipes of Peter Pan. This ought to be obvious to anyone who reads the timeless nonsense-verses I have already mentioned; or the more reasonable tale of Prince Tatters who, in rousing succession, lost his cap, coat, and ball; or that neatly disguised lesson in ogronomy and domestic science, called "Alice's Supper"; or that harrowing and magnificently condensed drama which I insist on quoting in full:

As Jeremi' and Josephine
Were walky-talking on the green,
They met a man who bore a dish
Of (anything you like to wish!)

They stared to see the man so bold;
They really thought he must be cold,
For he was clad, though chill the day,
In (anything you choose to say!)

The man returned their stare again;
But now the story gives me pain,
For he remarked in scornful tone,
(I'll let you manage this alone!)

And there is even worse to come;
The man (I've been informed by some)
Inflicted on the blameless two
(I leave the punishment to you!)

This simple tale is thus, you see,
Divided fair 'twixt you and me,
And nothing more I've heard or seen
Of Jeremi' or Josephine.

If there is anything to regret in this volume, it is an occasional omission. Such regret is sharpened because someone has advised the author to include "From New York to Boston" which, with its burden "Riding the resonant rail," is not only too sophisticated but too reminiscent of John Godfrey Saxe's famous "Riding on the rail." Yet, even as I write, I am conscious that this is carping. It is sufficient to say that "Tirra Lirra" contains all the old Laura Richards favorites and thirty new ones, that there are one hundred and ninety richly illustrated pages, more than one hundred lively verses about everything under the sun and several things that grow under an especially mad moon. Unhappy—and rare—is the child to whom the book will not be fernseed and open sesame.

Plums from Beebe

EXPLORING WITH BEEBE. By WILLIAM BEEBE. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1932. $2.

Reviewed by H. L. PANGBORN

MR. BEEBE is a great deal more than Director of Tropical Research of the New York Zoölogical Society, and a distinguished naturalist. He is even more than a master of exquisite artistry in the use of the English language, though there are few writers of the day who can approach the felicity of his style. He is something of a wizard—and there is only one of him. Much of the secret of his wizardry lies in his own unfailing enjoyment of whatever he is up to. He has such a tremendously good time of it! Whether he is soaring 20,000 feet up in an airplane or descending to incredible depths of the sea in his "bathysphere," or falling into pot-holes in a Panama jungle in a quest for the yapock, or hobnobbing with the Dyaks in Borneo, always and everywhere he is having such a good time. "It was my last night before leaving (for Galápagos)," he writes, "and there was no one in the world with whom I would have changed places." Such zets is contagious. He always carries his read with him.

The making of this volume is a happy idea. It is a collection of plums from several of his recent books; a selection made, according to the sub-title, "for younger readers,"—that is, with the omission of the more technically scientific passages of the originals—but it will be equally appealing to readers of any age. Each selection is complete in itself: a detached gem. He has drawn most heavily upon his "Galápagos" (which is not so readily accessible as the other books) and upon "The Arcturus Adventure." The others are "Jungle Days," "Beneath Tropic Seas," and "Pheasant Jungles" (Borneo). One could wish that a companion volume might be issued, including bits from some earlier books, especially from "Jungle Peace." One immediate result of publication of these extracts should be an increase in the circulation of all of his books, as it is hard to see how anyone who makes his acquaintance from these samples can fail to go in search of the original volumes to devour them in their entirety.

Duckling Into Swan

THE UGLY DUCKLING: a Biography of Hans Christian Andersen. By ISABEL PROUDFIT. Illustrated by MALTHE HASSELRIIS. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1932. $2.25.

Reviewed by ANNE STODDARD

"IT does not matter in the least having been born in a duckyard, if only you come out of a swan's egg!"—so wrote Hans Christian Andersen in the fable of the Ugly Duckling. The wistful parallel is obvious, for Andersen himself was an awkward, big-nosed little boy, born of humble parents, separated by a world of dreams from his matter-of-fact companions, pursued in his early life, like the poor duckling, by hunger and scorn—and, in the end, was to find himself no Ugly Duckling, but indeed a Swan. The tale was written in the days of Anderson's swanhood, when all Denmark and most of the world beside recognized his greatness, and Denmark's king entertained the son of the cobbler of Odense as an honored guest.

Using the fable of the Ugly Duckling as her *motif*, Mrs. Proudfit has written a fine biography for young readers, simple and gay, as any story about Andersen should be, for the gaiety of his imagination was never subject to the brutality of circumstance. The child who heard the red-legged storks talking Egyptian with their fellows, who took part in the dramas enacted by the rose-beetles in his mother's box of plants, whose "teeth ached with excitement" when anything special was about to happen, carried with him a talisman which saved his treasure from destruction through all the hardships of his Ugly Duckling days. And the book is bright as a hollyhock, in spite of dealing, in part, with sombre matters.

The delight of the old peasant woman,

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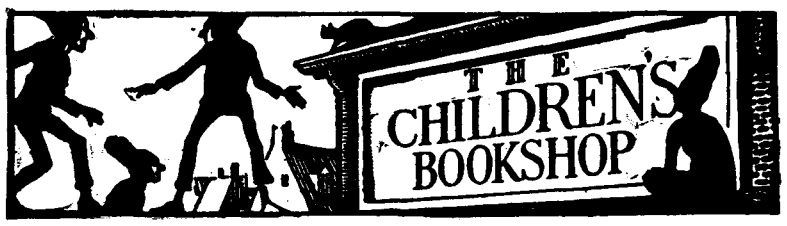

Andersen's grandmother, in the playful and grotesque elements of Danish folk-tales, the intense desire of his father to read books and plays instead of mending shoes, the tenderness of his mother towards her sensitive child—these were the sources of his genius. It developed under the harsh ministrations of poverty. Friends helped him, the King helped him, finally by prodigious studying the unlettered peasant boy entered the University of Copenhagen. From the time of his graduation from the university, doors began to open for Hans Christian Andersen, slowly, one at a time, where before they had been shut in his face.

The Ugly Duckling was unlucky in love, and he never married. Later, when he had become a great man, he met and loved Jenny Lind, but her dreams were only of her singing, and he remained single for her sake.

Any child old enough to read and enjoy Andersen's fairy tales can read and enjoy this book, for it is definitely keyed to the understanding of young children. The book is sympathetically illustrated by the Danish artist, Malthe Hasselriis, whose uncle, Hans Tegner, knew Andersen and illustrated some of the early editions of his fairy tales in this country.

The book is sympathetically illustrated by the Danish artist, Malthe Hasselriis, whose uncle, Hans Tegner, knew Andersen and illustrated some of the early editions of his fairy tales in this country.

Russia, New and Old

MADE IN RUSSIA. By WILLIAM C. WHITE. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1932. $2.

YOUNG AMERICA LOOKS AT RUSSIA. By JUDY ACHESON. The same.

COMRADE ONE-CRUTCH. By RUTH EPPERTON KENNELL. New York: Harper & Bros. 1932. $2.

NIKITA. By FRANCES B. PHELPS. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1932. $2.

MASHA. A Little Russian Girl. By SONIA MAZER. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1932. $2.

MASHINKA'S SECRET. By SONIA DAUGHERTY. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1932. $1.75.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

THREE of these books for young people go back to pre-Revolutionary Russia; three treat of the Russia of today. Of the latter, "Young America Looks at Russia" is an account of the impressions and adventures of the young daughter of one of the workers in the Near East Relief, written by herself; "Comrade One-Crutch" is a story set against the background of an American mining colony in Siberia; and "Made in Russia" is a young folks' book about Russian arts and crafts brought up to date to include tractors and giant dams and the young generation itself now being "made in Russia."

Mr. White, author of the latter, is a serious student of revolutionary Russia, whose "These Russians," a series of sketches describing various post-Revolutionary types, was well received a year or so ago. In the present volume, he discusses ikons, Kazan leather, Caucasus silver, village woodwork and linen, Bokhara rugs and kindred subjects, and follows this with a chapter or two on the new industrial Russia and the young generation which is growing up with it. Nothing "made" in Russia is as important as this new generation, Mr. White explains. The illustrations are soundly drawn and helpful. The book's information might be described as adult, although cast in juvenile form.

Judy Acheson's narrative, on the other hand, is the breezy gossiping of a young girl of high-school age about all sorts of things that she and Dad and Mother saw and did in the Near Eastern part of Russia. Miss Acheson is already an author—she wrote "Judy in Constantinople" on returning to New York at the age of twelve in 1929—and that may account for the grown-up air of her impressions. Then relief-workers, in the nature of things, get a rather inside view of the neighborhoods in which they are stationed. In any case, her chapters have the lively, on-the-spot air of good letters home.

Somewhat the same thing is true of "Comrade One-Crutch," for its author spent several years in Moscow and Kuzbas, in just the atmosphere depicted in the book, and the day-to-day adventures of the American lad in the story are doubtless a pretty literal transcription of her own experiences. The point of view is rather favorable to the present régime, and Big Bill Haywood is mentioned among those present in the Siberian mining camp where young David went with his parents.

Quite in another vein is "Nikita," which goes back to pre-Bolshevik Russia, and tells the romantic tale of a peasant lad who warned the lord of the manor, in the nick of time, of a peasant revolt which a Nihilst was stirring up on Prince Oblonsky's estate, and finally, after he had taken the place of a great violinist who was suddenly indisposed and had played before the Czar himself, was adopted into the Prince's family. The authors, who would appear to be two American ladies, have a real affection for the old Russia, and their story, which is well written and carefully illustrated, might almost have been done by some thoroughly "safe" writer of the old régime.

Miss Mazer's "Masha" also goes back before 1917, and pictures sympathetically a little peasant girl's experiences both with her own family and in the school conducted by her enlightened patroness, Madame Krenlin. Thanks to the latter and to her own ability, Masha is taken to the city and gets an inside glimpse of pre-revolutionary upper-class life. And when the earthquake did come, Masha, so we learn in a final brief chapter, helped Madame and the General to escape, and finally came herself to America. Miss Mazur, who is a portrait painter, provides the quaint drawings for her own story.

Mrs. Daugherty's "Mashinka's Secret" also tells about the adventures of a little country girl—not a peasant—who visited some high-life friends in pre-revolutionary Moscow. By having Mashinka meet the children of one of the revolutionary intelligentsia, Mrs. Daugherty contrives, without stressing political beliefs, to give a picture of both camps, for the kind-hearted little girl helps to burn some incriminating letters which might have made things pretty bad for Andrei's father, and Madame Voronsky, her hostess, when she discovers the youngsters burning the documents, puts aside her own political preferences and tactfully says nothing.

A Lilliputian World

WONDERS OF THE ANT WORLD. By HANNS HEINZ EWERS, translated by ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARION LOCKWOOD
American Museum of Natural History

THE average person, perhaps, does not feel any great love for insects, those small creatures which are so often the source of such real annoyance.

It would be strange, however, to find anyone, child or adult, who could fail to be interested in Dr. Ewers's book, "Wonders of the Ant World." With unerring dramatic instinct Dr. Ewers paints the colorful life of the ant peoples, as he has observed them here and there in the world. The present edition of this book is adapted especially for young people and gives to those who are entirely unfamiliar with the ants and their chararcteristics a general basis of knowledge concerning structure and habits before proceeding to discuss the more individual and less well-known traits and types. Through the entire book the wonderful social and community organization of the ants is stressed, as indeed it must be in any book on this subject. One wonders, however, when the author takes up the cudgels with "Exact Science," classing himself as artist rather than as scientist. One questions such statements as: "Ants probably have the power of reflection as well as that of reaching a conclusion"—particularly one questions this in a book written for youngsters who have no background of basic knowledge by which to judge so controversial a statement.

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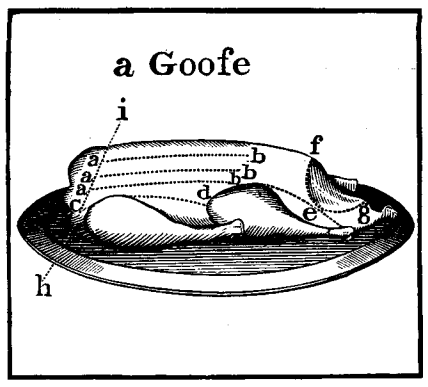

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Poetry

YUGOSLAV POPULAR BALLADS. By DRAGUTIN SUBOTIC. Macmillan. 1932.

In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. The volume of Dr. Subotic is an admirable proof of this. He gives us the first detailed study in English of the origin and development of the ballads dealing with the mediæval Serbs and he does an excellent piece of work. Then he passes to the history of those ballads in Western Europe and the result is surprising. Before our eyes passes a long series of celebrated authors, beginning with Goethe and the great philologist Grimm, the French writer Prosper Merimée, and down to Owen Meredith. All these men translate or pretend to translate the ballads. Few know anything of the language in which they were written and so they copy one another and they invent and paraphrase one another's translations until we seem to be dealing with an almost non-existent original germ. As a careful survey of the way in which translations have been made during the last century, and as a revelation of the reason why these translations are so often unsuccessful, this book is certainly unique and most suggestive.

THE CATHOLIC ANTHOLOGY. By *Thomas Walsh*. Revised by *George N. Shuster*. Macmillan. $2.50.

TITANIC'S KNELL. By *Henry Brenner*. St. Meinrad, Ind.: The Raven. 50 cents.

Religion

THE NEW CHURCH IN THE NEW WORLD. By MARGUERITE BECK BLOCK. Holt. 1932. $3.75.

This study of Swedenborgianism in America is a painstaking and thorough piece of work. For the first time we have a complete account of the influence of Swedenborg, especially in the age of Emerson. Here it is shown that Swedenborg with his touch of the morbid, as pointed out by Emerson, was taken up by the aberrant movements of the day, such as Mesmerism, Spiritualism, Theosophy, New Thought, and Christian Science. The inter-relations of these various cults are well brought out, emphasis being laid on the influence of Swedenborg upon Quimby, the real founder of Christian Science.

In the attempt to uphold the orthodox doctrine that the Swedish mystic was definitely inspired the author misses the point made by Emerson, namely that Swedenborg was one of the "analogy-loving souls." This will explain the so-called science of correspondence, whereby all things that occur in this world have their counterpart in the celestial world. With this, of course, as a principle anything could be proved. For example, the statement is made that Swedenborg as a prophet anticipated the modern doctrine of evolution, whereas historically he really presented the pre-Darwinian pre-formationism which the English scientist himself repudiated.

The whole matter as to Swedenborg's real place is best explained by an inadvertent description of one of Swedenborg's minor works, "The Worship and Love of God." This book is described as "a charming allegory, or platonic myth," and it seems inconceivable that anyone should take it literally as a scientific account of the creation—yet such is the case. With this principle in mind, one can understand how Swedenborg gained followers among poetic and artistic type of Americans who have continued his cult in such a delightful environment as the Bryn Athyn community, near Philadelphia, with its beautiful cathedral and its interesting but rather fanciful academy which revives the old Froebelian and analogical method of teaching in the kindergarten. Perhaps these children accept the doctrine of correspondence literally, but for adults on the outside the *Arcana Cœlestia* may seem in this present age a good deal like bedtime stories.

Travel

ENGLISH SPRING. By CHARLES S. BROOKS. Harcourt, Brace. 1932. $3.

Mr. Brooks, an accomplished essayist, and author of several other books about England, is discursive in manner, and so detached in his mildness of mood as to seem at times indifferent; he appears a blasé traveller who is all too familiarly bored with the time-worn ropes. By turns in bus, on train, on foot, he and Mary Brooks circumvented Devon and Cornwall, and crossed Somerset. She with her sketch pad in hand, to pencil sights in "England's transitory gleams of sunlight," he to pause and pen his impressions of town and country. Unabashed, he quotes authors on the spot, with astonishing pleasantness. He finds Dorchester the Casterbridge of Hardy's novel, and elsewhere observes that writers "offer a landscape, not as nature made it, but as seen darkly through the window of a mood." He recalls the Shelley of young, obscure, revolutionary days in Lynmouth. Nether Stowey follows with much discussion of the Wordsworths, and Coleridge. Tintagel highlights the book with a provocative talk on Mallory. But we wonder how the author could have overlooked those sea gulls, "white birds, flying, flying—" of Edwin Arlington Robinson's "Tristram," which we saw circling ceaselessly above King Arthur's ruins. Fashionable Bath produces literary allusions, and mirrors the "complete procession of England's national biography through the ages." Wisely, Mr. Brooks does not grant the reader any deep acquaintance with English history, and so doses him gently along the way.

He is at his best, however, while relating the countryside to literature, as Keats's "Bright Star" ode to Lulworth Cove,—or when he gives a brief dissertation on the English provincial stage; or when Dartmouth brings to his mind Hakluyt, and a happy eulogy of Elizabethan prose. He inflicts too many quips about the weather and British discomforts generally on the reader; and his frankly stated commercial attitude towards his writing seems an unfortunate pose. This is not a book to stir the senses or memory in recollection, nor one to be devoured greedily, but sipped slowly: in short a drowsy sort of volume to enjoy with a pipeful by the fire.

Brief Mention

Those interested in foreign affairs, both the periodical and the subject, will welcome the *Life and Letters of Archibald Cary Coolidge* just published by Harold Jefferson Coolidge and Robert Howard Lord (Houghton Mifflin, $4.50). * * * A thoughtful book with a provocative theme is *Conflicts of Principle* by President Lowell of Harvard (Harvard University Press, $1.50). The author says "Its object is simply to point out the need of search for the true limit between opposite, and therefore conflicting, principles; with examples to show how common these are in the actual affairs of life." * * * Those in search of facts on the difficult question of self-determination will find them in Otto Junghann's *The National Minorities in Europe* (Covici, Friede, $1.50). * * * Another provocative book is *Fads and Quackery in Healing* by Dr. Morris Fishbein (Covici, Friede, $3.50), a book on medical advertising, food fads, rejuvenation, chiropractic, osteopathy, etc., with a particularly interesting chapter for journalists on the incredible errors propagated by even such distinguished writers as Mr. Brisbane. * * * Of all the books on those lovely bays and creeks that border the Chesapeake, Paul Wilstach's seem to us the best, and his *Potomac Landings* (Bobbs-Merrill, $4) is made from that same excellent combination of history, description, and admirably chosen photographs that have distinguished his earlier books. * * * Another regional book, colloquial, reminiscent, and somewhat historical, is *Ozark Mountain Folks* by Vance Randolph (Vanguard Press, $3.75). He is the author of *The Ozarks: An American Survival of Primitive Society*. * * * A romantic story of Wagner's life through the Dresden period is the theme of *Restless Star: The Young Wagner*, by Hans Reisiger (Century, $3). * * * A more original theme is to be found in *Before the Curtain Falls*, an anonymous book published by Bobbs-Merrill Company ($2.50), a curious attempt to write in the form of a semi-fictitious autobiography an account of the experiences of "an old American" through the war, in Soviet Russia, and back in America, the whole done with some reminiscence of Dos Passos's "1919," and intended to be significant of American experience as well as a record of one American's adventures.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

I SUPPOSE I should reply in print, as I have been doing by mail, to inquiries from certain drama clubs as to the plays now most popular on the London stage. The one that topped the list when I left England a few weeks ago and bids fair to do so for some time to come, is "Evensong," by Beverley Nicholls and Edward Knoblock, based on the former's novel which people said must be based on the life of Melba, but which people who know musicians recognize as a masterly isolation and culture of the germ called "prima-donna." If this play comes to us, I hope it brings the admirable artist for whom it was created, Edith Evans, who had no chance at all to show her extraordinary gifts in her brief American appearance. J. B. Priestley's "Dangerous Corner" was another entertainment holding up against the heat-wave—this word is to be taken in the London, or Pickwickian, sense; besides a searching sort of plot and much conversation, it has managed to get advertised all over England by associating itself firmly in the public mind with the red road triangle warning motorists that danger is just around the corner. "Musical Chairs" is generally considered the best play by a beginner; "To-Morrow Will Be Friday" will bring back Marie Tempest to the Haymarket—which, to the dismay of patrons of the American Express Company, has been closed all summer. The astonishing city-wide vogue of "nonstop revue," by which London describes what in my young days we used to get from Keith and Proctor for a quarter as "continuous vaudeville," has brought back some of the very artists I most longed to see—the music-hall singers, the comedians with active eyebrows and hoarse, fruity voices, that I knew only through turns in which a young lady states condescendingly, "I will now endeavor to give you an imitation of —" and then sings something better than anything else on the bill. Now the originals are getting a chance to come back, and some of them I do know: I almost burst into tears in the middle of King's Road when I saw that Vesta Victoria—incomparable Vesta Victoria of "Waiting at the Church" and "Poor John!" —was on the bill at the Chelsea Palace for the following week. And speaking of old tunes, there is an elderly party who sits with a genuine hurdy-gurdy outside pubs in the vicinity of Fetter Lane early on a Saturday afternoon, in the hope of pence from hearts gladdened by a coming holiday and softened by pints of preliminary bitter, whose instrument knows only the tunes of Lottie Collins's day. It is curiously charming to hear her singing along with it, in accents of impeccable respectability "Tarara-*boom*-de-aye"—which last syllable you must remember should never be pronounced to rhyme with *day* but with *sky*.

"CAN you give me," says H. O., Dallas, Texas, "any information as to what works of Rainer Maria Rilke, the German poet, have been published in translation in America, and who the publishers are?" The "Duinese Elegies" have been published in England by the Hogarth Press at sixty-three shillings, in the original German with English verse translations by Edward Sackville West and his sister V. Sackville West; this is an English press but its publications are obtainable in the United States; it also publishes the "Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge" for seven-and-six; Heffer, another English publisher, brought out "Olivero" at the same price. Rilke's prose masterpiece, the mystic "Journal of My Other Self," is published in English in the United States by Norton, and the same publisher is just bringing out "Stories of God" and "The Tale of the Love and Death of Cornet Christopher Rilke." Some years since his "Auguste Rodin" was published by the Sunwise Turn in the translation of Jessie Lamont and Hans Trausil; I believe they also made translations of some of his lyrics, but I do not know if they are still within reach. Rilke's vogue outside of Germany was slow to start, but has been steadily increasing since his death in 1926.

"R. T., Oakland, Md., read once a travel book called "A Family Flight through . . ." some country she does not remember, though it is her impression that the book was one of a series, and her memory that the series was very popular with children interested in vicarious travelling. As this would seem to be a precursor of the travel books now so freely prepared for young readers, what was it, and who was the publisher? This is clearly "A Family Flight through France, Germany, Norway, and Sweden," by no less an American than Edward Everett Hale, in collaboration with Susan Hale. It was published a good many years ago by Lothrop, and up to the time of the war this and its companion volumes—for a series really was demanded by children—were still in print; they may be now for all I know. The other books in the set were flights through Mexico, Spain, and Egypt and Syria.

The same inquirer asks what is considered the best novel of Sarah Millin, one of whose books she has just read from an interest in South Africa, with the result that she wishes to read more by so gifted a novelist. My own idea is that Mrs. Millin goes deepest into her subject and treats it with the greatest artistry in "God's Step-Children (Liveright), but as this is about race and color complications in South Africa, it may be the one this inquirer has already read. In that case, she may choose among "Mary Glenn," "Adam's Rest," "Jordan's," and "Sons of Mrs. Aab," all published by Lireright.

CAN any reader of this department come to the rescue of a descendant of the commander of the ship *Wateree*, to which an "incredible accident" happened off Arica, Chile, in 1868? The accident was surely worth the adjective; the *Wateree* had the ship *Fredonia* in tow; there was an earthquake, and the *Wateree* was carried two miles inland and landed on a mountainside, where the crew of the steamship *Rochester* found her remains only in 1927.

I don't seem to see a crack in the catalogue even of the British Museum where I can get my toe in and climb to this information. Of course it's there; everything is in the B. M.—but if someone who knows all about it would tell me, how sweet that would be! I am told that some account of the disaster appeared in the *Youth's Companion* some time in 1890 or 1891.

E. R., Bloomington, Ill., asks if the Fall's forthcoming poetry includes any translations of collected Oriental poetry; "versions which preserve in admirable measure the Oriental characteristics of the original." I do not know what works of this kind may be in store for advance information does not go out so freely about verse as about fiction, but it may be that the "Japanese Poetry" of Curtis Hidden Page (Houghton Mifflin), which appeared not so very long ago in a limited edition, may for that reason perhaps not have come to the attention of this inquirer—who from the turn of his question I infer must know of the work of Arthur Waley, Wytter Bynner, Florence Ayscough, and other devoted translators, as well as the compilation of translations, "Lotus and Chrysanthemum," edited by J. L. French. Professor Page's "Japanese Poetry" is a historical essay enriched with two hundred and thirty of the most graceful and sympathetic translations from an Oriental language that I have read; to their fidelity I can, of course, bear witness, but high authorities have done so. The outer shape and fashion of the book corresponds to its contents.

L. F., Chapel Hill, N. C., asks about books on the training of hunting dogs. There are inexpensive manuals like "How to Train Setters and Pointers," by W. A. Bruette, published by *Forest and Stream*, or "The Sporting Dog," by J. A. Graham (Macmillan); there are "Breaking a Bird Dog," by H. Lytle (Appleton); "Pointers, Setters, and Spaniels and their Training," by H. L. Westphal (Judd); and "Principles and Practice of Dog Training," by C. E. Harbeson (Judd)—each of which costs two dollars, the last named being the newest. Then there are expensive, beautifully illustrated books such as "Good Gun Dogs," by H. F. Hardy (Scribner), or Cobb's "Hunting Dogs" (Crafton). I read such works with respectful amazement. Dogs, cats, or anything else on four legs, if they mind me at all do so with a sort of jaunty acquiescence, as one man to an-

(Continued on next page)

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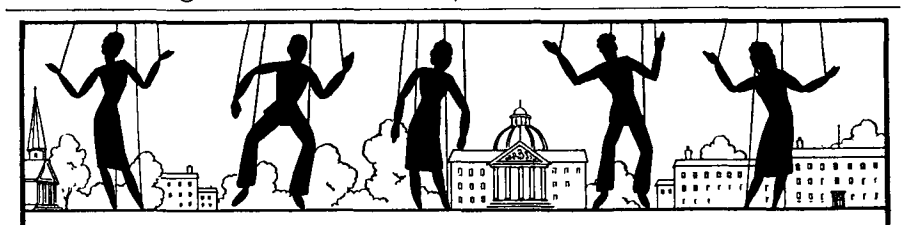
The Reader's Guide

(*Continued from preceding page*)

other; if a dog should ever perform for me the miracles of response that I see them doing here in subways, trams, and trains—where for this reason they are everywhere received—I think I would be too surprised to retain his respect.

J. D. H., *who lately inquired about books on Balzac's style,* is informed by a correspondent in Evanston, Illinois, that Les Presses Françaises, Paris, have just brought out in French an interesting study of Balzac by Ethel Preston of Chicago, called "Recherches sur la Technique de Balzac," and that this book, which includes reproductions of two pages of rare editions of Balzac and a graph presenting Balzac's achievements in graphic form, is on sale at Kroch's in Chicago for a dollar and a half.

Lord Birkenhead has, it is said, finished the Life of his father, on which he has been engaged for the last year and a half. It will appear in two volumes.



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1. *Champlain* (biography), by M. Constantin-Weyer.
2. *Saint Saturnin* (novel) by Jean Schlumberger . . . later published in translation by Dodd Mead, and offered in America by the Book of the Month Club. . . . Northcliffe Prize in England.
3. *Mal d'Amour* (novel), by Jean Fayard . . . Goncourt Prize . . . later published in translation by the Century Company.
4. *Les Fioretti de Jeanne d'Arc* (novelty), by J. J. Brousson.
5. *Madame Clapain* (mystery story), by Edouard Estaunié.
6. *Le Noeud de Vipères* (novel), by François Mauriac . . . on publication elected president of the Société des Gens de Lettres.
7. *L'U. S. S. R. Sans Passion* (travel), by Marc Chadbourne.
8. *Richelieu* (biography), by Comte de St.-Aulaire.
9. *Air Indien* (airplane travel), by Paul Morand.
10. *Balance Faussée* (novel), by Edmond Jaloux.
11. *Tel Qu'en Lui-Même* (novel), by Georges Duhamel.
12. *Les Bien-Aimées* (novel), by Jerome et Jean Tharaud.

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The Spiral Press

EMERSON'S "NATURE." Croton Falls, N. Y.: The Spiral Press. 1932. 100 copies, $10 each.

THE book before me might be dismissed merely as another reprint of an American classic, and a cursory examination of its pages would reveal little to intrigue the eye. But its excellencies are not those of the market, and it is not summarily to be dismissed. We have become so accustomed to typography which strains itself to gain attention that we tend to lose sight of the work which is so good that it escapes notice.

This edition of "Nature" is set in a really fine book type, newly made, from designs by Joseph Blumenthal, the master of the Spiral Press, by Louis Hoell of Frankfort. Rennaissance in feeling, with something akin to that noble procession of types, the Doves, Centaur, etc., it seems to me so normal in design and weight that one's eye is not attracted especially to it: and that is a decided virtue in any type. It can truthfully be called a beautiful letter.

Mr. Blumenthal has printed the book on the hand press, with the usual superiority of that method in the hands of a competent craftsman. I have too often referred to firmness of impression and depth of color as attained usually only in hand press work to need again to emphasize the point here. This book possesses both of these desiderata.

If any adverse criticism were to be given, it would be to suggest that a little more "dressing up" of the page might be desirable. It suffers a bit, as did the Doves books, from too much dependence upon type as type to give the page effectiveness. But it is a first-class bit of printing done in the best way. A book by the same press, again hand printed, is in process for the Limited Editions Club: I shall wait eagerly to see it. R.

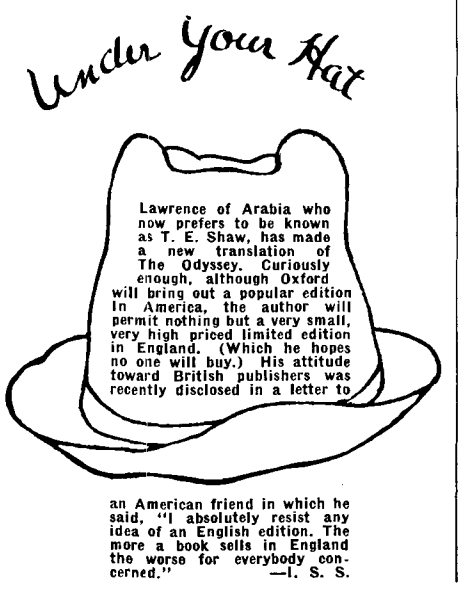
Scatterings

THE ODYSSEY

ANNOUNCEMENTS of the early publication of the long awaited translation of the "Odyssey" by a famous Englishman, designed by an equally famous American, have been received from the house of Emery Walker, London. The book will be one of the most important of recent books. Idiomatic English, even "slangy" at times, Mr. Roger's *Centaur* type, and twenty-six decorations from Greek vase-paintings printed on gold leaf, promise a book of more than usual interest. The price is $50, and the issue is limited to 530 copies bound in full black morocco.

POLIPHILUS

Mr. Philip Hofer's studies in variant copies of the Aldine "Hypner-otomachia Poliphili" of 1499, first printed in the *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* for July, 1932, has been reissued in paper covers.


Under Your Hat
Lawrence of Arabia who now prefers to be known as T. E. Shaw, has made a new translation of The Odyssey. Curiously enough, although Oxford will bring out a popular edition in America, the author will permit nothing but a very small, very high priced limited edition in England. (Which he hopes no one will buy.) His attitude toward British publishers was recently disclosed in a letter to an American friend in which he said, "I absolutely resist any idea of an English edition. The more a book sells in England the worse for everybody concerned." —I. S. S.

Batouala and Alice

BATOUALA, a Novel by RÉNÉ MARAN. Translated by A. C. BESSIE and illustrated by COVARRUBIAS. New York: Limited Editions Club. 1932.

THIS seems to me a cleverly constructed book, cleverly constructed and brutal, as is the story itself. Batouala made something of a sensation when it appeared in France, a story of the Equatorial African native living under French colonial domination, written by a negro who knew the place and the people intimately. Briefly the story deals with the old theme of two men and the one woman they both wanted. But also it tells the equally commonplace story of what happens to Europeans who govern subject people in Africa. It is a squalid story of both African natives and French colonial governors—the "contact of 'higher' and 'lower' races." Against the grossness of the African savage is set the depravity and debauchery of the white intruder.

The printer has printed the book too well: one could wish that it had come from a missionary press in Ubangi-Shari, left by some scuttling missionary to their ill-trained black boys. Their ill-printed book would have been incomparable. But even they would have had to use the *Franje's* Didot type, ridiculous in Equatorial Africa. The Walpole Printers have done better than that in the matter of type, even if their presswork is far too good: they have set the book in a modernized ionic letter in a large page devoid of typographic flourish—save for a paragraph mark which looks like a dubious bit of symbolism. It is a fitting type, not uncouth but savage.

The illustrations—many in line, half a dozen of them full page, raw color polychromes—are extremely effective. They are brutal neither in drawing nor color, only in the story they tell—in a place where a lesser artist would have yielded to temptation even as did the colonial commandants, and let himself be brutalized by his subjects. They are not lovely, but neither are the subjects.

The binding is in an appropriately decorated leather.

I must confess that the book annoyed me on first looking into it—subject, format, all. On careful examination I think it is an unusually successful attempt to dress the stage for an unpleasant, even stinking, story which cannot easily be forgotten.

ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND. By LEWIS CARROLL. The original illustrations by TENNIEL, re-engraved by BRUNO ROLLITZ. New York: Limited Editions Club. 1932.

IT is a terrific jump from the abysmal blackness of Equatorial Africa to the fantastic garden in England where Alice met the White Rabbit, and where she performed her endlessly entertaining feats of growing and ungrowing. The black man of "Batouala" is mind and body in the raw: Alice's readers and contemporaries, perhaps even her maker, grow ever more metaphysical in her presence. But for all but the most sophisticated, Lewis Carroll's story is still a story, an unforgettable personal possession become now almost a cherished antique. The first edition was printed in 1865. The printing of that first is . . . just what British printers did in the sixties, but the pictures are just what Tenniel was doing then, to the delight of readers then and now.

In this new edition Mr. Warde has printed the book as it ought to have been printed in the sixties, and to complete the illusion he has had Tenniel's drawings re-engraved by a diabolically clever German wood engraver. The result is an Alice possessing all the validity of the first edition for the average reader with the added charm of good typography and an elaborate gold stamped binding. R.

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News from the States

What the SATURDAY REVIEW *most desires for this department is the pithy paragraph upon some significant matter, whether in relation to author's activities, bookselling activities and problems, the trend of reading in a particular territory, or allied matters. Booksellers' anecdotes will be welcomed. It is our aim to furnish a bird's-eye view of reading and writing America which will prove valuable both to our subscribers and to the book world at large. We hope that our subscribers will submit items from time to time.*

TENNESSEE

The following paragraphs have been gathered for us in the South by *John Dandridge Stanard:*—

John P. Fort, who lives atop Lookout Mountain, Tenn., opened a school for writers in Chattanooga early in October. The school is to be conducted in Mr. Fort's office and will be noncommercial in character, being devoted entirely to artistic expression. Mr. Fort, who is the author of "Stone Daugherty" and "God in the Straw Pen," expects to have what he calls "sessions" two or three nights a week. Nothing in the way of creative art will be barred. Assisted by Mrs. Fort, the Chattanooga author will seek to develop the "wealth of material which is now being worked upon by local writers."

Carman Barnes, the Chattanooga schoolgirl who afforded a new car on the strength of her novel, "Schoolgirl," is to have a new book for people to talk about this Fall.

Allen Tate, when not abroad, lives at Clarksville, Tenn. In this same town *Evelyn Scott* was born in 1893. *Maristan Chapman* was born in Chattanooga in 1895 and lives at Sewanee, Tenn. Her home there is named *Neverland* and served as the birthplace for "The Happy Mountain."

TEXAS

The Lone Star state seems to be a lively one, and several contributors add to our information concerning it. First, *Harriett B. Stuart,* of Fort Worth, furnishes these items:—

Don Marquis, "best loved of American soothsayers," *en route* east from his California home, met with an automobile accident in Arizona which necessitated his stopping in Fort Worth for repairs. On that day two men in the Fair Book Shop were inquiring as to the writings of Don Marquis and as to the pronunciation of his name. A woman who had been loitering among the books with her son and daughter graciously supplied the information. And there, just as though they had stepped out of a book, were the whole Marquis family! They stayed some four hours visiting. The conversation ran from insurance to books, from salesmanship to philosophy, and included pungent stories of authors and their ways.

Again, *Emily Marine Shafer,* of El Paso, quotes *Joe Farr* and the local "Cockle Burr" to this effect:—

> Texas occupies all the continent of North America except the small part set aside for the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Texas owns all the north of the Rio Grande, the only dusty river in the world; also the only one which is navigable for mud cats, and pedestrians. Texas is so big that the people in Brownsville call the Dallas people Yankees, and the citizens of El Paso sneer at the citizens of Texarkana, Texas, as being snobs from the effete east. It is one hundred and fifty miles further from El Paso, Texas, to Texarkana, Texas, than it is from Chicago to New York. Fort Worth, Texas, is nearer St. Paul, Minn., than it is to Brownsville, Texas. Unless your front gate is eighteen miles from your front door you do not belong to society as constituted in Texas. One Texan's gate is one hundred and fifty miles from his front door, and he is thinking of moving his house back so that he will not be annoyed by passing automobiles and peddlers.

Our contributor adds:—

I have, however, found "Buck Barry: Texas Ranger," edited by *James A. Greer,* most effective in curing my "damned Yankee" notions! This book, published by the Southwest Press (Dallas), gives authentic information of the pioneering days in the Southwest, as the Texans (especially those young slaveholders who came to Texas from Missouri) saw it and lived it.

VIRGINIA

The following sidelight on the aristocrat of Southern States comes from *Julian R. Meade:*—

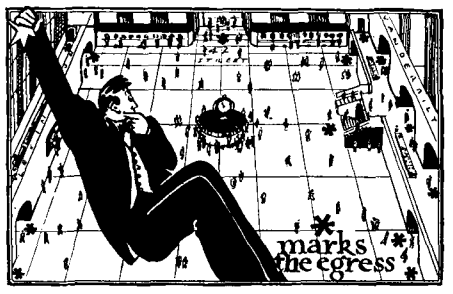
Last year a prominent publisher said so much to us about what lamentable booksellers we Virginians are that I am always rather shocked to know any book gets a cordial reception within our boundaries. The other day, for instance, I learned with surprise that in my home town, Danville, which has a population of about 22,000, between thirty and forty copies of "The Sheltered Life" already have been sold. That's saying no little, for most of our people are concerned with the tobacco and cotton industries, and literature is the least of their worries. But by Christmas, I believe, several hundred Danville readers will know this fine novel, and Danville is only a small part of the Old Dominion. Not everyone will take the book to heart: some will agree with a lady (not unlike some of the ladies of Miss Glasgow's Queensborough) who tells me that she was offended by the account of George Birdsong's visit to a Negro woman's house and says that "even Ellen Glasgow's style can't disguise the awful things she says."

You never know what books some people will like. "The Fountain" has had a vogue down here; I know a number of persons, usually addicted to the light and wholesome, who have nothing but praise for Charles Morgan. Well, there's no telling! Not long ago I saw a Negro barber in Charlottesville reading Cabell's "The Way of Ecben."

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Rates: 7 cents per word. Address Personal Dept. Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

CHARLOTTE—What is an egress? Why, the opposite of a step-in. Hanging from star in ceiling I drew this picture for you show-



ing all available egresses. Which do you prefer as rendezvous? But why oysters? I'm shellfish too.—GRAND CENTRAL.

PROFESSOR TUCKER BROOKE'S "Yale Shakespeare" gives "Spencer" actual human status. If Professor Brooke will show that Edward D. Vere did not write Sonnet 74 for his daughter Elizabeth; his Queene Elizabeth; his wife Elizabeth; I will donate $100 to his pet charity. If Doctor Rosenbach, University of Pennsylvania, assists, I will make it $100.30. George Frisbee.

WANTED: A woman who can use a presentable young person as companion—amanuensis-factotum. Discreet, *Saturday Review.*

A novel of
three who were
TRICKED BY THEIR HEARTS

•

LAWRENCE . . A cruel hope kept him forever turning living pages, all alike. He bathed in women as a bird bathes in dust until, through the summer hedge, he glimpsed

NANCY . . Shelley's spirit in the body of the young Greek Cleopatra. She was born delivered from evil. Because she loved Lawrence too much, she gave herself to

NICK . . the son of Lawrence. He was everything we mean by "The American type." Women read him poetry, wrote him little notes, were pure with him by day, and at night bit holes out of the pillow thinking about him. . . .

THESE THREE PEOPLE

were caught in the strange complexities of love. Their story is one to haunt the imagination. It is told by the brilliant author of "Wife of the Centaur" in his first novel in three years, a book which sweeps to an ending of pure Greek tragedy.

CYRIL HUME'S
My Sister My Bride

$2.00 DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
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The PHŒNIX NEST

IT has "got so" that one cannot pick up a magazine or a newspaper without a solecism immediately "leaping to the eye!" We were not, therefore, wildly surprised when, glancing at a story by *Nunnally Johnson* in *College Humor* (a magazine we had opened because of *Katharine Brush's* sprightly new column in it) we read the following caption under another of those pictures of the Great American Female: "Loa Breton stiffened. 'Just what do you mean by that? You are inferring that I did not have an affair—.'" So we dug into the little story and found that someone had sniffed at that girl with the remarkable name of Loa, meaning to *imply* something, and that Mr. Johnson had got his *infer* and *imply* confused in the contemporary manner. This seems to be a fault as common as saying "a strange kind of *a*—" something. Such usages are, of course, barbarous. But no one cares any more how the poor old English language is treated. Hundreds of people are putting words on paper who have no more right to handle words than a person who knows nothing about radio has any right to monkey with a set of tubes. The *New York Evening Post*, for instance, was once a well-written journal. Today, prominently placed upon its book-page one comes upon a headline, "Hemingway Deleted," stuck there by some ungrammatical ignoramus. One goes on to read, "Readers of Ernest Hemingway's 'Death in the Afternoon' will probably be surprised to know that the book was deleted at the last minute, and not for the usual reason that books are deleted, for the missing passage appears to have been something that Mr. Hemingway thought never would be missed." There is no mistake here. The writer—who thoroughly merits deletion!—was muzzily under the impression that "deleted" meant the same as "expurgated." Of course, "delete" is a transitive verb, and it means "strike out, obliterate." So first Mr. Hemingway was obliterated by the *Post's* brilliant journalist, then his book was obliterated, and finally we were asked to be surprised. We were! . . .

The *Yale Daily News* is gunning for new subscriptions in anticipation of a great change that may come over the university with the transition from the old régime to the new College Plan. The columns of the *Yale Daily News* are being made available to the parents of all undergraduates, and daily accounts are to be given of how the new plan in education is developing. Parents of Yale undergraduates should, by all means, subscribe to the *News*. We are heartily in favor of that. But if the *Yale Daily News* ever uses the phrase "innovated a plan" again, we shall tear up our diploma! . . .

Writing English is writing English. It is not writing some bastard sort of esperanto. But what is to be said of a country where you "contact" a man, get "an angle" on everything, aver, "My thought is—!" (One thought at a time, by all means! One thought is better than none), and admit a "yen" (the Chinese influence is spreading!) for either a pretty girl or an ice-cream soda? There is a great deal to be said for colloquialisms, and American slang is often highly expressive, but mere illiteracy at times when literacy is expected is a particularly poisonous thing. . .

Two deaths this last week have removed notable figures from the realm of journalism and letters. *Frank Ward O'Malley* was probably one of the greatest newspaper reporters America has ever seen. His name is forever associated with the old *New York Sun*. He lived a full life and carved out a grand career for himself. *Thomas S. Jones, Jr.*, was a notable poet whose work as dramatic critic and cable service writer was, in his time, distinguished. Some of his sonnets deserve to survive oblivion. We quote the following splendid one from his pen in memory of this dedicated artist who wrought beautiful things with a fine integrity:

ZARATHUSTRA

Outlined in fire against primeval night
He stood among the Magi, first to name
The unknown Source from which all
Being came,
And made the mind sole image of its
might;
Death, cold, and darkness strove to dim
his sight
With powers demonic hidden in man's
frame,
But from his hand upsoared the singing
flame
And summoned down the blazing Sons of
Light.

The mists of time hide creed and elder
god,
But not the Mage whose purity raised
men
And drew archangels to his lone desire:
Iran's grave prophet with his burning rod
Kindles the heart's high altar now as then,
And from the stars still falls the an-
swering fire.

We have read but few of the novels of *Francis Brett Young*, but those we *have* read cause us to be a Brett Young enthusiast. We find a texture in his prose somewhat richer and finer than that of a good many of his distinguished contemporaries. We are therefore glad of the news that his new novel, "The House under the Water" (Harper), has been acclaimed in London as one of his finest accomplishments. The *London Times* says he has now discovered his full powers. If this be so, it must be a book worth having, as we have always thought him a writer of high potentiality. The book will be published over here on the second of November. . . .

Herbert Gorman's "The Scottish Queen," scheduled for November 3rd by Farrar & Rinehart, is a new biography of *Mary Queen of Scots* which has, at a glance, the tinge of glamorous poetry that must always attend discussion of this most romantic queen. Gorman is a poet, and she is the favorite of many a poet. Gorman is also, however, a seasoned biographer, as his books on *Longfellow* and *Dumas*, among others, attest. He has, moreover, written much on *James Joyce* and has produced several novels and several volumes of poems. His best creative work in prose is indubitably "The Place Called Dagon," in which witchcraft plays so large a part. He is a versatile writer with genuine imagination. How sound a work historically, how freshly illuminating an estimate of Mary Queen of Scots his book may be we must leave to the authorities. From hastily running through it, we should say that it is vividly pictorial and has often the evocative phrase peculiar to a poet's descriptions. . . .

H. J. and *Hugh Massingham* have edited for Doubleday, Doran a volume entitled "The Great Victorians," in which they have endeavored to enlist the most representative company of the moderns so that the mind of our own age might gaze back upon the towering figures of the age it has left behind. Each great Victorian figure is treated by a distinguished modern writer, such as *St. John Ervine, Rebecca West, Lascelles Abercrombie, Chesterton, Lord David Cecil, H. M. Tomlinson*, and so on. Mr. *John Collier* is juster to *Tennyson* than is the cocksure *W. J. Turner* to *Swinburne*. Perhaps it is the distinct obtuseness in Mr. Turner that causes him so to berate a like quality—and Swinburne most certainly possessed his own obtuseness!—in the poet who is a number of spheres out of his reach. It is amazing how great achievement is eventually argued completely away by the little men of the ink-bottle. Mr. Turner's sweeping gestures outline his little inky figure against the magnificent and thunderous sunset that was Swinburne, reminding one of that anecdote of how *Hall Caine* looked in a bathing-suit as he approached the ocean. Turner makes many criticisms that are well-reasoned, but genius with all its faults on its head has a way of dwarfing its commentators. One may admit freely all Swinburne's faults. The fact remains that his course across the heavens was and remains that of an uncanny meteor. . . .

The last published work of *Mabel Loomis Todd* who died on October 14th was last year's new edition of the "Letters of *Emily Dickinson*" (Harper). Her new edition included a photograph of Emily Dickinson as a young woman, presented to Mrs. Todd by Emily's sister, *Lavinia*. It was reproduced from an untouched photograph of the original daguerrotype.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

INTERVIEWS WITH FAMOUS AUTHORS about their New Books

Marriage Can Be Happy and Amusing

By DENIS MACKAIL

No. 7 of a series of statements by the authors of some of this Fall's leading books—now at all bookstores.
DOUBLEDAY DORAN

I wrote "Greenery Street" because I wanted to be able to remember afterwards what the first year of marriage was like. Now I have written PENINSULA PLACE as a record of the same marriage ten years later. It's very English, and there aren't any complexes or triangles in it, but though it isn't autobiography, it's true.

Here's a bit of life so large and so near that fiction seems to have overlooked it.

But why shouldn't I write about people who are happily married?

The Romance of Courage

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

No. 8 of a series of statements by the authors of some of this Fall's leading books—now at all bookstores.
DOUBLEDAY DORAN

In TREEHAVEN I try once again to express what I felt in my own youth so strongly, and what girls everywhere are suffering today,—a sense of being shut away from real living, of being hopelessly out of the current of life and joy, of not knowing how to struggle through handicaps and limitations, somehow, to reach a woman's world of love and service.

Cynthia, like thousands of living girls, can't believe that her opportunity will someday find her out, naturally and rightly, and so she takes the chance of the illicit thing, and pays for it in bitter regret.

What I hoped to show was the courage of the amendment, rather than the weakness of the sin, and so bring the story to my favorite happy ending, after all.

Kathleen Norris.

"Finest American novel since Death Comes for the Archbishop"

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by Ellen Glasgow

Published in August . . . *THE SHELTERED LIFE* has sold through seven large printings. It is the "best-seller". Approximately one thousand people each day go to their bookstores for it. . . . Still, the number of copies this beautiful novel has sold is perhaps less impressive than the number of its readers who go back again and again to re-read remembered parts. . . . It lingers in the mind and haunts the imagination with its beauty and deep emotion. . . . It is the richest book of the year.

$2.50—DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

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